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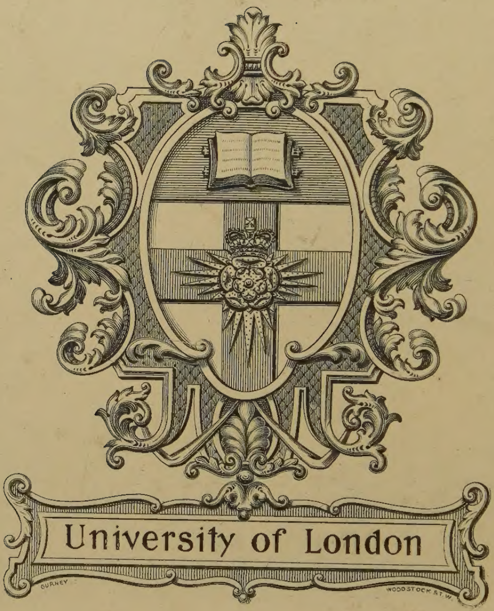
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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

FIRST SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

6 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CLVI.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE TWENTY-SIXTH DAY OF APRIL
TO THE TENTH DAY OF MAY, 1906.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

1906.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED,
UNDER CONTRACT WITH HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
BY
WYMAN AND SONS, LIMITED, FETTER LANE, LONDON.

8472

CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 26th APRIL, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz., Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 1

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz., Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; London Government Schemes (London and Penge, etc.) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow 1

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Reports from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz., Poole Corporation Water Bill; Sutton District Water Bill.

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 2

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Post Office Sites Bill (Standing Orders Applicable Thereto Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 6th day of April, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz., Post Office Sites Bill 2

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Brighouse, the Guisborough, and the Hemel Hempstead Joint Hospital Districts," presented by Mr. Runciman; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 175.] 3

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Belper (Rural), Blaby (Rural), Ealing, Harrowgate, Ilfracombe, and Runcorn," presented by Mr. Runciman; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 176.] .. 3

London County Council (Money) Bill.—"To regulate the expenditure of Money by the London County Council on capital accounts during the current financial period and the raising of Money to meet such expenditure, and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 3

Private Bills (Group C)—Mr. Cawley Reported from the Committee on Group C of Private Bills.—That for the convenience of Parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at Twelve of the clock.

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Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Petition from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 4

Education (England and Wales) Bill (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Abberton; Abbots Morton; Accrington (two); Addington (two); Alberbury; Aldborough (two); Aldermaston; Alford; Alvechurch; Andover; Areley Kings; Ashton-under-Lyne (two); Asterby with Goulceby (two); Astley (two); Aston Rowant; Athelhampton with Burlestone; Baguley (two); Baldock; Banham (two); Barbon (two); Barnard Castle (two); Battersea; Bedern; Beetham (two); Belchford; Bergh Apton; Berrow; Billingford; Bilsdale (two); Birmingham; Birstall (three); Birtsmorton; Bishampton; Bishop Auckland (two); Blackley; Bolton (two); Bosheston (two); Boxford; Brackley; Bradley; Braysworth; Brereton cum Smethwick; Bricklehampton; Brightwalton (two); Brixworth (two);

Broadwas ; Broome ; Broughton Astley (two) ; Brynamman (two) ; Buckingham ; Bucklesham ; Burgate ; Burgh ; Burnham (two) ; Burton Joyce ; Bushley ; Canonbury ; Carmarthen (two) ; Chalfont St. Peter ; Charlton ; Charlton Horethorne ; Chatham (six) ; Cilyewm (two) ; Checkendon (two) ; Chelford ; Chorlton cum Hardy ; Churcham and Bulley ; Claines ; Clapham ; Clapton (three) ; Clayton le Moors ; Cleckheaton (four) ; Cloughton (two) ; Cockerington ; Cofton Hackett ; Coldharbour (two) ; Combs ; Cranworth ; Cranworth with Letton and Southburgh ; Crick ; Cropthorne ; Cuddington ; Cuddington and Cheam Common ; Culham ; Culmstock ; Cwmcarvan (two) ; Dafen (two) ; Darlington ; Dartford ; Datchet ; Delabole (two) ; Denton and Haughton ; Derby (two) ; Dingestow ; Ditchingham ; Dorking (three) Dover ; Dudley ; Ealing ; Eardisley (two) ; East Challow (two) ; East Haddon ; East Molesey ; East Tisted ; Ebberston and Allerton (two) ; Eckington ; Elmore ; Esher ; Eskdale ; Eweline ; Exeter ; Farforth cum Maidenwell ; Faversham ; Finstall ; Flyford Flavel ; Forncett St. Peter ; Forthampton ; Frampton on Severn (two) ; Frensham (two) ; Frostenden ; Gainford (two) ; Gargrave (two) ; Gilcrux (two) ; Gillingham (four) ; Glyntawe (two) ; Godalming ; Gomersal (three) ; Goodramgate ; Gorslas ; Gorstas ; Gorton (four) ; Great and Little Hampton ; Great Cheverell ; Great Comberton ; Great Hockham ; Great Horwood cum Singleborough ; Great Witcombe (two) ; Greenhill ; Grendon (two) ; Guarlford (two) ; Guildford (two) ; Guilsborough ; Hales Owen ; Hallow ; Hardingstone ; Harringworth ; Harrow (four) ; Hartlebury ; Haugh ; Hazelmere (two) ; Hedgerly ; Hedgerly Dean ; Hemingby ; Henbury (two) ; Henley-on-Thames ; Himbleton ; Hindlip ; Holmwood ; Holt ; Horwich ; Hurst Brook (two) ; Ipswich ; Irnham (two) ; Islington (six) ; Kensington (three) ; Kidbrook ; Kidderminster ; Kingston-upon-Hull ; Kingston and Dormston ; Kintbury and Avington ; Kirkby Stephen (two) ; Knighton-on-Teme ; Leamington ; Leigh (three) ; Letterston (two) ; Lincoln (two) ; Little Comberton ; Llanfihangel Aberbythych (two) ; Llangeler ; Llangennech ; Llanhennoch (two) ; Llanllowell ; Llannon (two) ; London ; Long Marton (two) ; Loughfield ; Ludborough ; Ludgershall (two) ; Lusby ; Marsworth ; Meldon ; Merrow (two) ; Mitchel Troy (two) ; Moorsby ; Muston (two) ; Newbold-on-Stour ; Newbridge on Wye with Llysdinam (two) ; Newnhame ; Newton Blossomville ; North Crawley (two) ; North Elmham ; Northwould ; Norton and Leuchwick ; Nottingham (three) ; Nutfield ; Nuthurst ; Oakley ; Oare ; Odisham ; Okewood (two) ; Old Swinford ; Ombersley ; Ormesby (two) ; Ospringe ; Overbury ; Padgate (two) ; Pateley Bridge ; Paulton (two) ; Pentlow ; Piddletown ; Plymouth (two); Preston (four) ; Preston next Faversham ; Rainbow Hill ; Raithby by Spilsby ; Ranworth cum Panxworth ; Rattlesden (two) ; Redbourne ; Redditch ; Red Hill ; Revesby ; Rochdale ; Roscoe ; Rougham ; Rous Leuch ; Roxeth ; St. Albans ; Salwarpe ; Sansthorpe ; Scamblesby cum Cawkwree ; Scremby ; Scrivelsby cum Dalderby ; Shalford ; Shamley Green (two) ; Sheldwich Leys ; Shelsley Beauchamp (two) ; Shenstone (two) ; Shepley (two) ; Shire Moor (two) ; Skirbeck Quarter ; Smetterton ; Southampton (six) ; South Stoneham (two) ; Sparsholt ; Spilsby and Hundleby ; Stafford (three) ; Stamford ; Staunton ; Stepney ; Stockcross ; Stoke Newington (six) ; Stoke Prior ; Stoke Trister ; Stone ; Stonham Aspal ; Stoulton ; Stourbridge ; Stradbroke ; Stretton (two) ; Swyncombe ; Thorpe Hamlet ; Tumby ; Tunstall (two) ; Twyning ; (two) ; Ulney ; Upton-on-Severn ; Upton St. Leonard's ; Upper Arley ; Upper Sapey (two) ; Walsgrave ; Wantage ; Warborough ; Warmfield ; Welford ; Welford cum Wickham ; Werrington ; West Ashby ; West Gorton ; West Hartlepool (three) ; Weston Longueville ; Whaddon ; Whitley ; Whitson Goldcliff (two) ; Wichenford ; Wick ; Wilden ;

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Willington Haimer (two); Willoughby; Witley; Wolverley; Wooburn; Woodford; Worcester (six); Wribbenhall; Yardley Hastings; and York; to lie upon the Table. 4

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL.—Petition of the Personal Rights Association, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 6

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition of the Scottish Licensed Trade Defence Association against; to lie upon the Table 6

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition of the Scottish British Women's Association, in favour; to lie upon the Table 6

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Perth, in favour; to lie upon the Table 6

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN ACT, 1905.—Petition from Shoreditch, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 6

VACCINATION ACTS.—Petitions for repeal; From Manchester; Southport: and, Waterford; to lie upon the Table 6

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (EVICTION NOTICES.)—Copy presented, of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st March, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 6

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT ACT, 1903.—Copy presented, of Report of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland of all his Proceedings under the Act, for the year ended 31st March, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 7

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 12th March; *Mr. O'Shee*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 135] 7

MAGISTRATES (IRELAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 22nd March; *Mr. Flynn*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 136] 7

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) (PERSONS COMMITTED.)—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 30th March; *Mr. Mooney*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 137] 7

PRISONS (RELIGIOUS CREED OF PRISONERS).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 26th March; *Mr. Hay Morgan*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. No. 138.] 7

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Report and Papers relating to the Training of Teachers for the past years 1904–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 7

TECHNICAL EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th July, 1905; *The Lord Advocate*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 139] 7

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POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).—Copy presented, of Postal Agreement for an exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Switzerland, dated the 8th October, 1905–17th October 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 7

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).—Copy presented, of Postal Agreement for an exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Hungary, dated 28th October, 1905–16th November, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 7

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3564 to 3566 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 8

Harbour, etc., Bills (Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill.—Copy ordered, "of Report of the Board of Trade on the Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*) 8

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

POSTING OF TYPEWRITTEN CIRCULARS.—Question, Mr. Rufus Isaacs (Reading) Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 8

EXEMPTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS IN NATAL FROM MILITARY SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Alden (Middlesex, Tottenham); Answer, Mr. Churchill 8

ROYAL ENGINEERS AND ORDNANCE SURVEY.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 8

PRINTING OF ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 10

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Major McMicking (Kircudbrightshire); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 10

LEASES OF IRISH FORESHORES.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 11

TRAINING INSTITUTIONS FOR MIDWIVES.—Question, Mr. Helme (Lancashire, Lancaster); Answer, Mr. John Burns 12

DECORATIONS OF LORD BEACONSFIELD'S STATUE ON PRIMROSE DAY.—Question, Dr. Shipman (Northampton); Answer, Mr. Harcourt 12

TOBACCO IMPORTS INTO INDIA.—Question, Mr. Pike-Pease (Darlington); Answer, Mr. Secretary Morley 12

IRISH LAND PURCHASE.—Question, Mr. Glendinning (Antrim, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 13

IRISH INTERMEDIATE EXHIBITIONS.—Question, Mr. Glendinning; Answer, Mr. Bryce 13

CHARGE FOR ARMOY WATER SUPPLY.—Question, Mr. Glendinning; Answer, Mr. Bryce 14

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THE MARCH OF THE 1ST BUFFS FROM LYDD TO DOVER.—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire); Answer, Mr. Haldane 15

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

THE DOUGLAS COMMITTEE.—Questions, Mr. T. Hart-Davies (Hackney, N.); Answers, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) 15

GREENWICH OBSERVATORY.—Question, Mr. Ashley (Lancashire, Blackpool); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 16

NAVAL CONSTRUCTION.—Questions, Mr. Alden; Answers, Mr. Edmund Robertson 16

H. M. S. "DREADNOUGHT."—Questions, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answers, Mr. Edmund Robertson 17

THE EXPLOSIVES COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) .. 17

METHOD OF PAYING ARMY PENSIONS.—Question, Mr. J. M. Robertson (Northumberland); Answer, Mr. Haldane 18

ORDNANCE COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Haldane 18

COST OF THE NEW SHORT RIFLE.—Questions, Mr. Weir and Sir Francis Lowe; Answers, Mr. Haldane 18

LOCAL OPTION IN BRITISH COLONIES.—Question, Mr. Lief Jones (Westmoreland, Appleby); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 19

GENERAL BOTHA AND CHINESE COOLIE CRIMES.—Question, Mr. Mackarness (Berkshire, Newbury); Answer, Mr. Churchill 20

TRANSVAAL FINANCE.—Question, Mr. J. M. Robertson; Answer, Mr. Churchill .. 20

COLONIAL CONFERENCE.—Questions, Mr. J. M. Robertson and Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answers, Mr. Churchill 21

CHINESE COOLIES IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Questions, Mr. Mackarness and Sir Gilbert Parker; Answers, Mr. Churchill 21

TIBETAN INDEMNITY.—Questions, Sir H. Cotton (Nottingham, E.); Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. John Ellis, Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) 23

GREAT BRITAIN, CHINA AND TIBET.—Question, Sir H. Cotton; Answer, The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) 24

INCREASE OF EGYPTIAN GARRISON.—Question, Mr. Gooch (Bath); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 24

MACEDONIA.—Question, Mr. Lynch (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 24

TURKEY AND EGYPT.—Question, Mr. Lynch; Answer, Sir Edward Grey .. 25

LONDON POLICE AND THE PUBLIC.—Question, Sir Philip Magnus (London University); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 25

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EXMOUTH BURIAL DISPUTE.—Question, Sir G. Kekewich (Exeter); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 25

POST OFFICE MAIL CART DRIVERS.—Questions, Mr. Ashley, Mr. J. Ward (Stoke); Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 26

LIFE SAVING ON COASTING STEAMERS.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 27

WORKMEN'S TRAINS.—Questions, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answers, Mr. Kearley 27

EDUCATION BILL FINANCE.—Questions, Mr. Ashley; Answers, The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.).. 28

EDUCATIONAL BILL STATISTICS.—Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 28

CERTIFICATED TEACHERS.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Birrell .. 28

ORPHAN HOME SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Ferens (Hull, E.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 29

POWERS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES.—Question, Sir G. Kekewich (Exeter); Answer, Mr. Birrell 29

FRUIT CULTURE.—Question, Mr. H. H. Marks (Kent, Thanet); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 30

NEW GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS.—Question, Mr. Cremer (Shoreditch, Haggerston); Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire) .. 30

LONDON'S PARKS.—Question, Mr. Cremer; Answer, Mr. Harcourt 31

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—REFRESHMENT DEPARTMENT, WAGES OF EMPLOYEES.—Question, Mr. Morton (Sutherland); Answer, Mr. Jacoby (Derbyshire, Mid.) 32

PHYSICAL DETERIORATION.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 32

BALINKILL BURIAL GROUND.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair .. 33

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD REPORT.—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, Mr. Sinclair 33

INVERNESS FISHERIES.—Question, Mr. John Dewar (Inverness); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 33

IRISH AGRICULTURAL SCHEMES.—Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool) .. 34

UNTENANTED LAND.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Cherry 34

JUVENILE PRISONERS IN IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answers, Mr. Cherry 34

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Cork Evicted Tenants—Case of Mrs. Mary Eagan.—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Cork County, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Cherry 36

Case of Patrick Foyle.—Question, Mr. W. Abraham; Answer, Mr. Cherry .. 36

Condition of the Royal Canal.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Kearley 37

Kenmore Harbour.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire) 37

NEW BILLS.

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities (No. 2) Bill.—"To establish a single franchise at all elections, and thereby to abolish university representation and to remove the Disabilities of Women," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Byles, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Atherley Jones, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Masterman, Mr. Money, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. P. W. Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th June, and to be printed. [Bill 177.] 39

Crown Lands Bill.—Sir George Kekewich, Mr. Dundas White, and Mr. Butcher nominated members of the Select Committee on the Crown Lands Bill, with Two Members to be added by the Committee of Selection.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*) 39

Dean Forest Bill.—Sir George Kekewich, Mr. Dundas White, and Mr. Butcher nominated members of the Select Committee on the Dean Forest Bill, with two members to be added by the Committee of Selection.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*) .. 39

Supply [6th Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Emmott (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates, 1906–7.

Revenue Departments.

1. £602,700, to complete the sum for Customs.

2. £1,429,500, to complete the sum for Inland Revenue.

Civil Services.

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,290, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council."

Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 39
The Financial Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 41
Colonel Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square) 42

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £5,290, be granted for the said service"—(*Colonel Legge.*)

Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 42
Mr. Stuart Wortley (*Sheffield, Hallam*) 43
Mr. Stanley Wilson (*Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness*) 44
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 45
Sir Francis Lowe (*Birmingham, Edgbaston*) 45
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 46
Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 47
Mr. Victor Cavendish (*Derbyshire, W.*) 47
Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 47
Mr. Maddison (*Burnley*) 48
Sir A. Acland-Hood (*Somersetshire, Wellington*) 49
Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend*) 49
Mr. H. H. Marks (*Kent, Thanet*) 50
Mr. McKenna 53
Mr. Paul (*Northampton*) 53
Mr. Lane-Fox (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash*) 54
Mr. Stuart Wortley 55
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 55
Mr. Samuel Evans (*Glamorganshire, Mid.*) 56
Mr. George Faber (*York*) 57
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 58
Mr. Morton 60
Mr. McKenna 62
Mr. Weir (*Ross and Cromarty*) 64
Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin Co. S.*) 64
Sir Gilbert Parker 64
Mr. Summerbell (*Sunderland*) 65
Lord Turnour (*Sussex, Horsham*) 65
Colonel Legge 66

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 134 ; Noes, 232. (Division List No. 52.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Claude Hay 69

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,190, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

Mr. McKenna 70
Lord Turnour 71

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 62 ; Noes, 293. (Division List No. 53.)

Original Question again proposed.

Lord Turnour 75

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,090, be granted for the said Service."—(*Viscount Turnour.*)

Mr. H. H. Marks .. 76
Mr. Ashley (*Lancashire, Blackpool*) .. 76
Mr. McKenna .. 77

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. J. A. Pease (*Essex, Saffron Walden*) .. 77
Mr. Bridgeman (*Shropshire, Oswestry*) .. 78

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,140, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Bridgeman.*)

Mr. McKenna .. 79
Mr. Stuart Wortley .. 80
Mr. Morton .. 80
Mr. George Faber (*York*) .. 18

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 73 ; Noes, 294. (Division List, No. 54.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Claude Hay .. 85

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,790, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

Mr. McKenna .. 85
Mr. J. Ward (*Stoke-on-Trent*) .. 85
Mr. T. W. Russell (*Tyrone, S.*) .. 86
Lord R. Cecil (*Marylebone, E.*) .. 86
Mr. Maddison (*Burnley*) .. 87
Mr. Sloan (*Belfast, S.*) .. 87
Mr. Rees (*Montgomery Boroughs*) .. 88
Mr. Bridgeman .. 88
Mr. Seddon (*Lancashire, Newton*) .. 89
Mr. McKenna .. 89
Mr. Claude Hay .. 90

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

4 Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £25,243, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Civil Service Commission."

Mr. Stuart Wortley .. 90
Mr. McKenna .. 92

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Mr. Victor Cavendish (*Derbyshire, W.*) 92
Mr. Rees 93
Mr. William Rutherford (*Liverpool, West Derby*) 93
Mr. J. Ward 94
Mr. Weir 95
Captain Craig (*Down, E.*) 95
Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, S.*) 96

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the Clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further proceeding was postponed without Question put.

Midland Railway Bill [By Order]—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."

Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 97
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) 99

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Colonel Lockwood (*Essex, Epping*) 99
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (*Mr. Kearley, Devonport*) 101
Mr. Weir (*Ross and Cromarty*) 102
Mr. Barrie (*Londonderry, N.*) 102
Mr. Everett (*Suffolk, Woodbridge*) 104
Mr. R. J. Price 104

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

[MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £25,243, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the salaries and expenses of the Civil Service Commission."

Mr. Ashley 105

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £25,143, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Ashley.*)

Mr. McKenna 105
Mr. Wardle (Stockport) 106
Mr. McKenna 106
Mr. Morton 107
Sir A. Acland-Hood 107
Mr. McKenna 108

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

5. £39,699, to complete the sum for Exchequer and Audit Department.

6. £5,589, to complete the sum for Friendly Societies Registry.

Sir A. Acland-Hood 108
Mr. McKenna 109

Vote agreed to.

7. £65, to complete the sum for the Mint, including the Coinage.

Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (Lanarkshire, N.W.) 109

Mr. McKenna 109

Vote agreed to.

8. £7,348, to complete the sum for National Debt Office.

9. £14,430, to complete the sum for Public Record Office.

Mr. Ashley 109
Mr. McKenna 109
Mr. J. Ward 109
Mr. T. L. Corbett 110
Mr. Ashley 111
Mr. Wm. Rutherford 111
Colonel Legge 112
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 112
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) 113
Mr. Thornton (Clapham) 114

Vote agreed to.

10. £1,000 to complete the sum for Public Works Loan Commission.

Mr. Morton 114
Mr. William Rutherford 114
Mr. J. Ward 115
Mr. McKenna 116
Mr. William Rutherford 116
Mr. Morton 117

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Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a sum, not exceeding £10,210, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

Mr. Morton 119

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a sum, not exceeding £5,210, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Morton.*)

Mr. Claude Hay 119
Mr. Charles Craig 120
Lord Turnour 123

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Aliens Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next 124

Harbour, Etc., Bills (Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 26th April; *Mr. Lloyd-George*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 140.] 124

Adjourned at seven minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 27TH APRIL, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Kidderminster Gas Bill [LORDS].—To be read the third time upon Monday next 125

Macclesfield and District Tramways Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 125

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New Mills Urban District Council Bill (King's Consent Signified).—Bill read the third time and passed 125

Uxbridge Gas Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 125

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; London Government Schemes (London and Penge, etc.) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 125

PETITIONS.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Barnsley Main; Bedwellty Pits; Blackwood Pochir; Bloxwich; Broughton Moor; Caerphilly; Cradley; Dearne Valley; Denaby Main; Denby Grange; Dowlais; Ebbw Vale; Fryston; Grimthorpe; Hemsworth; Haigh Moor and Woolley Moor; Hazlehead; Hill and Cakemore; Hodroyd; Howden Clough; Lepton; Lofthouse; Lye; Micklefield; Mitchell's Main; Park Hill; Primrose Hill; Primrose Main; Navigation; Newmarket Silkstone; Ossett Roundwood; Outfield Pit; Rotherham (No. 2); Saville Pit; Seaton Moor Pit; Stanhope Silkstone; Taff and Cynon; Tredegar; Ty Trist (No. 2); Wharncliffe Silkstone; and Woolley Collieries; to lie upon the Table 125

Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Petition from Ossett, in favour; to lie upon the Table 125

Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Petition from Garden City, Letchworth, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 126

Education (England and Wales) Bill (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of law; from Abergwili; Adstone (two); Ampney Crucis; Anerley (two); Ansford; Ardsley (two); Ash Priors; Ashton; Bacton on Lea; Barnsby; Barrington; Barton on Humber; Basingstoke; Batcombe; Bebington; Bedminster; Belsize Park; Bishop's Hull (two); Boothby Graffol; Borstal (two); Brackley; Brannston (two); Bredicot; Bromley; Brondesbury (two); Brockholes; Brookfield; Bucknell; Burleydam; Burnage (two); Cadeby with Osbeston; Cadham; Carlton le Moorland; Castleton (four); Cawthorne (two); Cheadle Hulme (two); Chester; Chipstable; Christchurch; Church Lawton; Cinderhill; Clerkenwell; Cockett; Congresbury; Cromhall; Crostwick; Crowcombe (two); Cudham; Cuxham (two); Dalton in Furness (two); Dodford; Down Ampney; Easington (two); East Bridgeford (two); East Farndon; East Finchley; East Quantockshead; East Tilbury; Egham; Egremont (two); Ellastone; Emley (two); Farnborough; Farthingstone (two); Felthorpe (two); Foulridge (two); Framingham Pigot; Furnham; Gravesend (two); Great Yarmouth; Grimsargh; Halifax (five); Hampstead (three); Happisburgh; Haynford; Highgate Rise; Hinchley; Horsham (two); Horsley; Honley; Hoxal; Huddersfield (two); Huish Champflower (two); Hyson Green; Jackfield; Kilburn; Kingston upon Hull; Knodishall; Leasingham; Leigh; Llancarfan; Landilo - Talybont (two); Llangain; London (six); Lyncombe; Maidford (two); Maidstone; Marden (two); Martham (two); Martley; Matson; Meltham Mills (two); Middleton (two); Milborne Port; Mossley (two); Muchelney (two); Nailsworth; Napton on the Hill; Naunton (two); Navenby (two); Neen Sollars with Milson (two); Nether Stowey (two); New Basford; North Collingham; North Finchley; North Hykeham (two); Northleach; Northleach and Eastington; Northwood; Nottingham; Old Basford; Old Cleeve (two); Old Radford; Old Thornham; Ormesby (two); Orton on the Hill (two);

Ovenden; Over Stowey; Oving with Pitchcott; Parkfield; Pauler's Pury; Penarth (two); Penge (two); Penmaen; Penzance (two); Penrhiwceiber; Phillack (two); Reynoldston (two); Rhossili (two); Rochdale (two); Rochester; Runham (two); Rusholme; St. Buryan; St. Fagan's (two); Salford; Shepscombe; Shipton under Wychwood; Sholing (two); Shrewsbury; Siddington (two); Sketty (two); Skirbeck; Southampton (two); South Crosland (two); South Hampstead (three); Stand (two); Stanton; Stockport; Stockton Heath (two); Stoke under Ham (two); Strood (two); Sunbury Common; Swansea (three); Thornes; Timberscombe (two); Wakefield; Walcot; Walthamstow; Wambrook; West Chinnock; Weston-super-Mare; Weybridge; Wheatley; Whitchurch (two); Wick Rissington; Wilshaw (two); Winterbourne; Wispington; Wolverton; Woodchester (two); Woolley (two); Wootton Courtney (two); and, Ystalyfera (two); to lie upon the Table 126

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Edinburgh; and Hambleton Hill; to lie upon the Table 127

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—Petition from Bermondsey, against; to lie upon the Table 127

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 127

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petition from Bermondsey, against; to lie upon the Table 127

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petition from Hull, in favour; to lie upon the Table 127

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (DISQUALIFICATION REMOVAL) BILL.—Petition from Bermondsey, in favour; to lie upon the Table 127

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (HOURS OF POLL) BILL.—Petition from Bermondsey, in favour; to lie upon the Table 127

VACCINATION ACTS.—Petition from Bath, for repeal; to lie upon the Table .. 128

VOTING DISQUALIFICATION (POOR LAW) REMOVAL BILL.—Petition from Bermondsey, in favour; to lie upon the Table 128

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE (UNITED KINGDOM, COLONIES, AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address March 27th; *Mr. Lehmann*]; to lie upon the Table 128

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

SLEEPING SICKNESS IN CENTRAL AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Churchill 128

FAIR WAGES CLAUSE.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. McKenna 128

Salaries of Poor Law Officers.—Question, Mr. Horniman (Chelsea); Answer, Mr. John Burns 129

Erection of Cottage by Cork Rural District Council.—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Cork County, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 130

Land Sub-Commissioners' Decisions in Roscrea.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien (Tipperary, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 130

Closure of Army Votes.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Haldane 131

Selection (Standing Committees).

Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. John Tennant, Sir James Kitson, Mr. Wedgwood, Mr. Levy, Mr. Robert Balfour, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Gill, and Mr. Seddon.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Reckitt, The Lord-Advocate, and Mr. Hobhouse; and had appointed in substitution:—Mr. Chiozza Money, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Herbert Samuel, and Mr. Beauchamp.

Reports to lie upon the Table 131

Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Marcarness (Berkshire, Newbury) 131
Mr. Winfrey (Norfolk, S.W.) 137

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Mackarness.*) .. ..

Mr. Abel Smith (Hertfordshire, Hertford) 144
Mr. Brodie (Surrey, Reigate) 148
Mr. Vivian (Birkenhead) 151
Mr. Silcock (Somersetshire, Wells) 153
Mr. Lyell (Dorsetshire, E.) 155
Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) 156
Mr. W. H. Lever (Cheshire, Wirral) 157
Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs) 159
Mr. Wedgwood (Newcastle-under-Lyme) 161
Captain Hervey (Bury St. Edmunds) 162
Mr. Strauss (Berkshire, Abingdon) 164
Mr. Courtney Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 165
Mr. Walter Long (Dublin County, S.) 167

The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. John Burns, Battersea*) 171
Mr. Rowlands (*Kent, Dartford*) 179
Colonel Lockwood (*Essex, Epping*) 179
Mr. Byles (*Salford, N.*) 179

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Select Committee.

Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Jackson (*Greenwich*) 181

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Cairns (*Newcastle-on-Tyne*) 185
Mr. F. E. Smith (*Liverpool, Walton*) 190

And, it being Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Monday next.

NEW BILL.

Ground Game.—Bill to amend the Ground Game Act, 1880, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Beale, Viscount Dalrymple, Mr. Lane-Fox, Major McMicking, Mr. Osmond Williams, and Mr. Erskine.

Ground Game Bill.—"To amend the Ground Game Act, 1880," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 11th, and to be printed. [Bill 178.] 192

Whereupon Mr. Speaker, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at three minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 30TH APRIL, 1906.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—Poole Corporation Water; Sutton District Water.

Also the Certificates that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in respect of the petitions for the following Bills :—Ritz Hotel, Limited; Crellin's Patents.

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And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—Metropolitan Police Provisional Order ; Scottish Provident Institution Buildings [H.L.] ; Epsom and Ewell Gas ; Dowlais Gas ; Merthyr Tydvil Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 193

Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.] ; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.] ; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned on Monday, the 9th instant, until To-morrow ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 193

West Cumberland Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.].—The Lord Chancellor informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The orders made on 19th March last and the 3rd instant discharged. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with 193

National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 193

Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill ; Post Office (Money Orders) Bill ; Notice of Accidents Bill ; Police (Superannuation) Bill. Brought from the Commons 194

Carlisle Corporation Bill.—Todmorden Corporation Bill ; Great Eastern Railway Bill ; Bacup Corporation Bill ; Cardiff Gas Bill ; North East Lincolnshire Water Bill ; Thornton Urban District Gas Bill ; Macclesfield and District Tramways Bill ; New Mills Urban District Council Bill ; Uxbridge Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons ; read 1ª ; and referred to the Examiners 194

County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.] ; Wallis' Divorce Bill [H.L.] ; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.] ; Dover Harbour Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to .. 194

Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.].—The order made on Tuesday, the 13th of March, appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged 194

Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.] ; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.] ; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Verulam, the Earl of Eldon, the Viscount Hill, and the Viscount Colville of Culross be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Harrowby, the Lord Monson, the Lord Seaton, and the Lord Somerton (*E. Normanton*) ; read, and agreed to 194

Clacton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.] ; Newport Corporation Bill [H.L.] ; West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; Bury Corporation Bill [H.L.] ; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill [H.L.] ; County of Durham Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.] ; Cumberland Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Viscount Ridley ; read, and agreed to 194

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Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Railway Clearing System (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill [H.L.]; Crediton Lighting and Power Bill [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Ravensworth be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Leigh; read, and agreed to 195

Hull and Barnsley Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The orders made on the 8th of March last and the 3rd instant discharged, and Bill committed 195

Haslingden Corporation Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The orders made on the 5th of March last and the 3rd instant discharged, and Bill committed 195

Truro Gas Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The orders made on the 12th of March last and the 3rd instant discharged, and Bill committed 195

South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The orders made on the 8th of March last and the 3rd instant discharged, and Bill committed 195

Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 195

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 195

Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.].—Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee 195

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]; Clacton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee .. 195

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons 196

South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 196

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.—Petitions in favour of maintenance of existing religious teaching in Church of England schools of—

1. Parents and guardians of children attending schools at Darwen; Darwen, St. John the Evangelist; Darwen, St. John, Central; Manchester, St. Stephen's; Manchester, Stowell Memorial; Manchester, St. Peter's, Westleigh; Manchester, St. Wilfrid's; Manchester, St. Andrew's; Manchester, Christ Church; Appley Bridge, Manchester; Laugho, Manchester; Hornby, Manchester; Ashworth, Manchester; Dobcross, Manchester; Barrowford, Manchester; Holme-in-Cliviger, Burnley; Chorlton-cum-

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Hardy; Eccleston; Hulme, St. Michael's; Hulme, St. Philip's; Hulme, St. Mary's; Hulme, St. John the Baptist; Woodford, Chester; Gorton, All Saints'; Pendleton, John Street School; Oldham, St. Mary's; Newton Heath, All Saints'; Salford, St. Stephen's; Fallowfield and Ladybarn; Chorlton-on-Medlock, St. Luke's; Pendlebury, Christ Church; Levenshulme, St. Andrew's; Heywood, All Souls'; Scotforth, St. Paul's; Burnage; Todmorden; Horwich; Adlington; Douglas, near Southport; Walton-le Dale; Overton; Brindle Heath; Flixton; Loughton, Manchester; Royton, St. Anne's; Royton, All Saints'; Royton, St. Paul's; and Preston, St. James'. 2. Petitions in favour of Religious Liberty, sound Religious Education for children according to the faith of their parents, and the maintenance of denominational training colleges, of teachers in schools at Holme-in-Cliviger, Burnley; Darwen; Manchester, St. Stephen's; Manchester, Stowell Memorial; Manchester, St. Andrew's; Newton Heath; Chorlton-cum-Hardy; Douglas, near Southport; Eccleston; Hornby, Manchester; Hesketh, near Preston; Laugho, Manchester; Dobcross, Manchester; Whitworth, Rochdale; Gorton, All Saints'; Pendleton, John Street School; Barrowford, Manchester; Newton Heath, All Saints'; Salford, St. Stephen's; Fallowfield and Ladybarn; Walton-le-Dale; Todmorden; Preston, St. James'; Royton; Levenshulme, St. Andrew's; Heywood, All Souls'; Scotsforth, St. Paul's; Adlington; Miles Platting, St. Luke's; Brindle Heath; Flixton; Pendlebury, Christ Church; Hulme, St. Mary's; Chorlton-on-Medlock, St. Luke's; Hulme, St. John the Baptist; Droylesden; Burnage; Oldham, St. Mary's; and Bury (Elton), All Saints'.

Read and ordered to lie on the Table. 196

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS—RECESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the following Papers, having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty, had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz.:

Mines and Quarries.—I. General Report and Statistics for 1904—Part IV. Colonial and Foreign Statistics. Statistics relating to persons employed, output, and accidents at mines and quarries in the British Colonies and in Foreign Countries. (April 10.)

II. Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines under the Coal Mines Regulation Acts, 1887 to 1896, the Metalliferous Mines Regulations Acts, 1872 and 1875, and the Quarries Act, 1894, for the year 1905. East Scotland District, R. McLaren; West Scotland, R. M. Ronaldson; Newcastle, J. B. Atkinson; Durham, R. Donald Bain; York and Lincoln, W. Walker; Manchester and Ireland, John Gerrard; Liverpool and North Wales, Henry Hall; Midland, A. H. Stokes; Stafford, W. N. Atkinson; Cardiff, F. A. Gray; Swansea, J. T. Robson; Southern, J. S. Martin. (April 10.)

Banking, Railway, and Shipping Statistics (Ireland).—Report on the Banking and Railway and Shipping Statistics of Ireland, for the half-year ended 31st December, 1905. (April 10.)

Trade Reports.—I. Annual Series.

No. 3549. Chile (Coquimbo).
No. 3550. Austria-Hungary (Triéste).

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No. 3551. United States (Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky). (April 10.)
No. 3552. Italy (Genoa).
No. 3553. Columbia (Santa Marta). (April 11.)
No. 3554. France (Réunion).
No. 3555. Norway. (April 19.)
No. 3556. Greece (Morea, Aetolia, and Acarnania).
No. 3557. Argentine Republic (Buenos Ayres).
No. 3558. Venezuela (Ciudad Bolivar). (April 19.)
No. 3559. Greece (Corfu).
No. 3560. Sweden (Stockholm and Eastern Coast of Sweden). (April 20.)
No. 3561. Turkey (Palestine). (April 21.)
No. 3562. Egypt (Alexandria). (April 24.)
No. 3563. Germany (Leipzig). (April 26.)
No. 3564. United States (States of California, Nevada, and Utah, and Territory of Arizona).
No. 3565. Italy (Rome).
No. 3566. Russia (Batoum). (April 27.)

II.—MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

No. 646. Persia (Persian Customs Regulations).
No. 647. United States (Turpentine Industry). (April 10.)
No. 648. Italy (Agriculture of Tuscany). (April 21.)

POST OFFICE.—

I. Additional articles to the Money Order Convention between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Denmark, dated 20th December, 1905, and 23rd January, 1906. (April 10.)

II. Agreement between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Royal Imperial Austrian Postal Administration concerning the exchange of money orders. (April 10.)

III. Agreement for an exchange of money orders between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Hungary, dated 28th October, 1905, and 16th November, 1905. (April 27).

IV. Agreement for an exchange of money orders between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Switzerland, dated 8th–17th October, 1905. (April 27.)

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE (OBSERVATORY).—Report of His Majesty's Astronomer at the Cape of Good Hope to the Secretary of the Admiralty, for the year 1905. (April 10.)

FIRE BRIGADES AND FIRES, 1903 (ENGLAND AND WALES).—Return relative to Fire Brigades and Fires in England and Wales, for the year 1903. (April 11.)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF (INTERIM STATEMENT)).—Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Austria-Hungary as modified by commercial treaties with Germany, Russia, Italy, Belgium, and Switzerland. (April 11.)

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India Trade.—Tables relating to the trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries, 1900–1901 to 1904–1905. (April 11.)

Prisons (Scotland) Act, 1877.—Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the Sixty-seventh Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland. (April 11.)

East Africa Protectorate.—Return of grants of land in the East Africa Protectorate from 1st January, 1904, to 31st December, 1905 (in continuation of [Cd. 2331] Africa, No. 15 of 1904). (April 19.)

Uganda Protectorate.—Report on a botanical mission through the forest districts of Buddu and the Western and Nile Provinces of the Uganda Protectorate by Mr. M. T. Dawe, officer-in-charge, Forestry and Scientific Department. (April 19.)

Electric Power and Supply Bills.—Memorandum by the Commissioners of Works. (April 19.)

Straits Settlements, Hong Kong, Gibraltar.—Further correspondence relating to measures adopted for checking the spread of venereal disease (in continuation of [Cd. 9253], September 1899). (April 19.)

National Gallery, &c.. (Scotland).—Twelfth Annual Report to the Secretary for Scotland by the commissioners and trustees of the Board of Manufactures in Scotland, for the year ended 30th September, 1905. (April 19.)

Royal Observatory, Edinburgh.—Sixteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer-Royal for Scotland. (April 19.)

Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Acts, 1886–1887.—Report by the Crofters Commission being for the year ended 31st December, 1905. (April 19.)

Trade.—Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom with Foreign Countries and British Possessions, 1905, compared with the four preceding years: Volume I. (Summaries, abstract, and detailed tables of imports and exports.) (April 19.)

Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland).—Fifth Annual General Report of the Department, 1904–1905. (April 19.)

Treaty Series, No. 3 (1906).—Treaty of commerce and navigation between the United Kingdom and Roumania; signed at Bucharest, 31st October, 1905. (Ratifications exchanged at Bucharest, 17th March, 1906). (April 23.)

Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain).—Forty-ninth Annual Report for the year 1905 of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. Part I. List of Schools and detailed Reports. (April 25.)

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Louping-Ill and Braxy Committee).—Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to inquire into the Aetiology, Pathology, and Morbid Anatomy and other matters connected with the diseases of sheep, known as Louping-Ill and Braxy.

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Part I. General Report.

Part II. Details of Investigation.

Part III. Summary of Suggestions. (April 25.)

EGYPT, No. 1 (1906).—Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General, on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1905. (April 25.)

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Report and Papers relating to the training of teachers, for the year 1904–1905. (April 27.)

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT ACT, 1903.—Report of the Lord-Lieutenant of all his proceedings under the Act, for the financial year ended 31st March, 1906. (April 27.)

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887.—Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the quarter ended 31st March, 1906. (April 27.)

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACTS, 1854–1894.—Seventeenth Annual Report of the Railway and Canal Commission, with Appendix. (April 28.)

The same were ordered to lie on the Table

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON ENDOWED CHARITIES).—Report made to the Board of Education in the result of an inquiry into endowments subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part to purposes of elementary education in the administrative county of Northampton or in any part thereof 202

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with Appendix, 1905–1906

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FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890 (SIAM).—Order passed at the Council held on April 4th, 1906, under the authority of a Royal Commission, entitled "The Siam Order in Council, 1906." 202

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894 (COLLISIONS AT SEA).—Order, passed at the Council held on April 4th, 1906, under the authority of a Royal Commission, making provision as to lights and signals of fishing vessels in substitution for those contained in Article 10 of the Regulations scheduled to the Order in Council of August 11th, 1884, as amended from time to time 202

COUNTY COURTS.—Rules, 1906; explanatory memorandum 202

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS, ENGLAND AND WALES).—Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, for the year ended September 29th, 1905. 202

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Local Loans Fund (Accounts, 1904-1905).—Accounts of receipts and payments by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, in respect of the capital and income of the local loans fund, for the year ended March 31st, 1905; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon 202

Irish Land Purchase Fund Account (1903-1905).—Accounts of receipts and payments by the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt in respect of the capital and income of the Irish Land Purchase Fund, from November 1st, 1903, to March 31st, 1905; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon 203

Public Records (Prison Commission).—Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents existing or accruing in the office of the Commissioners of Prisons and Directors of Convict Prisons, which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office 203

Polling Districts (County Borough of Tynemouth).—Order made by the council of the county borough of Tynemouth dividing the borough into polling districts 203

Shop Hours Act, 1904.—Orders made by the councils of the following city, county, and county boroughs, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department fixing the hours of closing for certain shops in the city and county of Bristol; county borough of Bolton 203

Penal Servitude Acts, 1853–1891 (Conditional Licence).—Licences granted by His Majesty under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864, to Frederick Sadler, William Jones, James Kitching 203

Prisons, England and Wales (Treatment of Selected Male Criminal Prisoners).—Draft of rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under Section 25 of the Prisons Act, 1877, and Section 2 of the Prisons Act, 1898, appropriating Borstal Prison and part of Lincoln Prison to selected male criminal prisoners, and providing as to the treatment of selected male criminal prisoners between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one under special rules 203

Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890.—Account showing receipts and expenditure on account of proceedings under the Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890, during the year ended March 31st, 1906 204

Bankruptcy Act, 1883 (Proceedings).—Account showing the receipts and expenditure on account of bankruptcy proceedings during the year ended March 31st, 1906 204

Greek Loan of 1898.—Account up to March 31st, 1906 204

Superannuation.—Treasury Minute, dated April 12th, 1906, declaring that Robert William Street, boy, Ordnance Vessel "Prudent" War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

Treasury warrant, dated April 23rd, 1906, amending warrant of September, 1887, relating to the grant of gratuities and allowances under Section 1 of the Superannuation Act, 1887 204

Egyptian Guaranteed Loan of 1885.—Account up to March 31st, 1906 .. 204

Puplic Records (Ireland) Act, 1867.—Rules made under Section 17 of the Act 204

Metropolitan Police.—Accounts showing the sums received and expended for the purposes of the Metropolitan Police and Police Pension Funds between April 1st, 1905, and March 31st, 1906.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 204

Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877.—Statutes made by the Governing Body of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, on December 29th, 1905, amending certain of the Statutes of the college.

Statutes made by the Governing Body of Merton College, Oxford, on December 9th, 1905 (and sealed on December 14th, 1905), altering and amending Statutes III., V., and VIII. of the Statutes of the college .. ..

Statutes made by the Governing Body of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, on (1) April 23rd, 1904 (and sealed on December 13th, 1905), amending Statute 24 (*b*); and (2) December 2nd, 1905 (and sealed on December 13th, 1905), amending Statutes 24 (*b*) and 32 (*a*) of the Statutes of the college.

Laid before the House pursuant to Act), and to be printed. [No. 55] .. 204

Thames Conservancy.—General Report of the Proceedings of the Conservators of the River Thames during the year ended December 31st, 1905, with Statement of the Accounts of the Conservators of the River Thames for that year: Delivered pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 205

Westminster Bridge and the Thames Embankment.—Return respecting: Laid before the House (pursuant to order of the 8th of March last), and to be printed. (No. 54) 205

Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill.—Read 1^{a}; to be printed; and to be read 2^{a} to-morrow (*The Lord Denman*). (No. 56) 205

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.—Read 1^{a}; to be printed; and to be read 2^{a} to-morrow (*The Lord Granard*). (No. 57) 205

Notice of Accidents Bill (No. 58). Police Superannuation Bill (No. 59).—Read 1^{a}; and to be printed 205

Wireless Telegraphy Bill.—Order of the day for the House to be in Committee, read, and discharged 205

German Gipsies in Scotland.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 205

The First Lord of the Admiralty (*Lord Tweedmouth*) 206

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, at half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 30TH APRIL, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

London County Council (Money) Bill (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.—London County Council (Money) Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 208

Provisional Order Bill (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow 208

Provisional Order Bills (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time to-morrow 208

PRIVATE BILLS PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Crellin's Patents Bill [Lords]; Ritz Hotel, Limited, Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 208

Midland Railway Bill (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).—Bill read the third time, and passed 209

Kidderminster Gas Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 209

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill, "to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the Urban District of Sligo and the Counties of Kildare and Limerick," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Bryce; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 179] 209

North Berwick Corporation Order Confirmation Bill, "to confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to North Berwick Corporation," presented by Mr. Sinclair, and ordered (under Section 7 of the Act), to be considered upon Wednesday 209

Cathcart District Railway (Superfluous Lands) Order Confirmation Bill, "to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to the Cathcart District Railway," presented by Mr. Sinclair, and ordered (under Section 7 of the Act) to be considered upon Wednesday 209

Electric Power and Supply Bills.—Ordered, That the Memorandum by the Commissioners of Works on Electric Power and Supply Bills be referred to the Committee on the London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill.—(*Mr. Harcourt*) 209

Corporation of London (Blackfriars and other Bridges) Bill, reported, with Amendments.—Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed .. 209

Wandsworth and Putney Gas (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill, reported [parties do not proceed].—Report to lie upon the Table 210

Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill, reported.—Report to lie upon the Table 210

PETITIONS.

Clerks of the Peace and County Councils Bill.—Petition from Bury St. Edmunds, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 210

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.—Petitions in favour; From Aldwarke (No, 2); Bruntcliffe; Bwllfa; Cadeby Main; Cwmaman; Dinnington; Ellenborough; Gelli Ilaf; Greasbro; Heckmondwike; Hickleton Main; Kiveton Park; Low Laithes; Moorhouse Guards; Nantymelyn Gray; Old St. Helen's; Robin Hood; Rotherham; Scholes; and, Silverwood Collieries; to lie upon the Table 210

Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Petition from Stoke Bruerne, against; to lie upon the Table 210

Education (England and Wales) Bill (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Ampfield; Arreton (two); Aycliffe; Barton upon Irwell (two); Baschurch; Biggin; Biggleswade; Bellerby (two); Billingham (two); Birmingham; Blackpool (two); Bournemouth; Boxmoor (two); Burghclere; Burnley; Bury (two); Carlton Scroop; Clifton; Clifton Brighouse; Cockayne Hatley; Compton and Shawford (two); Croft; Deaf Hill cum Langdale; Duddeston; Durham; Egglescliffe; Elton; Elwick Hall (two); Eversley; Fair Oak (two); Fakenham (two); Fyfield; Grateley (two); Greywell (two); Hadleigh (two); Hampton; Hampton Hill; Hampton Wick; Hannington; Harrold; Hatherden in Andover (two); Hathersage (two); Hay (two); Hornsea; Houghton le Spring; Kelloe; Kingsclere (two); Kingsley (two); Laverstoke; Lightcliffe (two); Margate; Mirfield (two); Monk Hesleden, Morley cum Churwell (two); Newmarket (two); Northampton (two); Nottingham; Rookhope; Ruislip; St. Mary Bourne; St. John's in the Vale (two); Savile Town (two); Sherburn; Shincliffe; South Helton; South Tidworth; Stockbridge (two); Stoke Charity; Teddington (two); Ticehurst (two); Tostock; Tredington; Welton; Westbrook; Margate; West Stow; Whitchurch (two); Woolton Hill (two); and Wouston to lie upon the Table .. 210

Education of Defective Children (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 211

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ENDOWED CHARITIES (ELEMENTARY EDUCATION) (NORTHAMPTON).—Copy presented, of Report made to the Board of Education in the result of an Inquiry into Endowments subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part to proposals of Elementary Education in the administrative County of Northampton or in any part thereof [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 211

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT 1877 (OXFORD).—Copy presented of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Merton College, Oxford, on December 9th, 1905, altering and amending Statutes III., V., and VIII, of the College Statutes [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 141.] 211

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).—Copy presented of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, on April 23rd, 1904, amending Statute XXIV. (b), and on December 2nd, 1905, amending Statutes XXIV. (b) and XXXII. (a) of the College Statutes [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 142] .. 211

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (CAMBRIDGE).—Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of SidneySussex College, Cambridge, on December 27th, 1905, amending certain of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 143.] 212

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 4th April, 1906, making provision as to lights and signals of fishing vessels in substitution for those contained in Article 10 of the Regulations scheduled to the Order in Council of August 11th, 1884, as amended from time to time [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 212

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of April 4th, 1906, entitled The Siam Order in Council, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 212

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.—Account presented, of the Gross Public Income and Expenditure in the year ended March 31st, 1906, together with the Balances in the Exchequer at the commencement and at the termination of the year, and the amounts received into or issued from the Exchequer in respect of Funded and Unfunded Debt created or redeemed in the said year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 144] 212

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Warrant, dated April 23rd, 1906, amending Warrant of September 1887, relating to the grant of gratuities and allowances, under Section 1 of the Superannuation Act 1887 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 212

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade up to the 31st December, 1905, and of the proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 145] 212

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACTS, 1854 TO 1894.—Copy presented, of Seventeenth Annual Report of the Railway and Canal Commission, with Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 213

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POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY BOROUGH OF TYNEMOUTH).—Copy presented, of Order made to the Council of the County Borough of Tynemouth, dividing the Borough into Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 213

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Bolton, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for barbers' and hairdressers' shops within the borough [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 213

METROPOLITAN POLICE.—Accounts presented, of the Metropolitan Police and the Police Pension Funds for the year ended March 31st, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table. and to be printed. [No. 146] 213

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with Appendix, 1905–6 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table. 213

DRUMDOE, COUNTY ROSCOMMON (INQUIRY).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered April 11th; *Mr. James O'Kelly*], to lie upon the Table 213

PUBLIC RECORDS (IRELAND) ACT, 1867.—Copy presented, of Rules made under the Public Records (Ireland) Act, 1867, dated April 2nd, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 213

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1906–7).—

Copy ordered, "of Statement of Revenue and Expenditure as laid before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget."—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 147] 213

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EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.—Copy ordered "of Statistical Tables relating to Emigration and Immigration from and into the United Kingdom in the year 1905, and Report to the Board of Trade thereon."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*) 214

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Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill: Lord Turnour; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Meysey Thompson.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee of Selection; that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill: Sir William Evans-Gordon; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Gilbert Parker.

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NEW BILL.

Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) (No. 2) Bill.—"To grant certificates to persons in charge of Steam Engines, Boilers, and Steam Cranes," presented by Mr. Steadman; supported by Mr. Barnes, Mr. C. Duncan, Mr. James Haslam, and Mr. Joseph Walton; to be read a second time upon Monday, June 18th, and to be printed. [Bill 180] 272

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (WAYS AND MEANS).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings of the Committee of Ways and Means, if under consideration at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 353 ; Noes. 88. (Division List No. 55) .. 272

WAYS AND MEANS.

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(In the Committee.)

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Motion made, and Question proposed, That for the increase of three-pence per pound payable on stripped tobacco under section two of the Finance Act, 1904, there shall, as from the first day of May, nineteen hundred and six, be substituted an increase of one halfpenny per pound; and that the drawbacks allowed by the same Act on tobacco of the following description shall, as from the twenty-first day of May, nineteen hundred and six, be reduced by the substitution for the ordinary rate set out in the Table of Rates of Drawback in the Schedule to the said Act of the rate following (that is to say) :—

		s.	*d.*
In the case of cigars	the lb.	3	1
„ cigarettes	„	3	0
„ cut, roll, cake, or other manufactured tobacco	„	2	11
„ snuff, not being offal snuff	„	2	10

—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

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Question put, and agreed to.

Continuance of Additional Customs Duties on Tobacco, Beer, and Spirits.—Resolved, That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections two, three, four, and five of the Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by Section five of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and seven.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Continuation of Additional Excise Duties on Beer and Spirits.—Resolved, That the additional Excise duties on beer and spirits imposed by Sections six and seven of the Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and seven.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Permanent Annual Charge.—Resolved, That the permanent annual charge for the National Debt for the current financial year be twenty-eight and a half instead of twenty-eight million pounds.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

China Indemnity.—Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the application in like manner as the new sinking fund is applied of any sums paid into the Exchequer on account of the China Indemnity.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Income-Tax.—Resolved, That Income-tax shall be charged, for the year beginning the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred and six, at the rate of one shilling in the pound.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Amendment of Law.—Resolved, That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the National Debt, Customs, and Inland Revenue.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow ; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

Allotments (London) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Lord Willoughby de Eresby 367
Mr. J. Williams Benn (*Devonport*) 368
Colonel Legge (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 368

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday.

Adjourned at eight minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 1st MAY, 1906.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.—The Lord Privy Seal (*M. Ripon*) acquainted the House that His Majesty had (by Commission) appointed the Earl of Onslow Speaker of the House in the absence of the Lord Chancellor. The said Commission was read 369

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.—The Lord Privy Seal (*M. Ripon*) acquainted the House that His Majesty had (by Commission) appointed the Lord Loreburn Speaker of the House; in the absence of the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Onslow, the Earl of Halsbury, the Earl Waldegrave, the Lord Ribblesdale, and the Lord Balfour of Burleigh. The said Commission was read 369

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LORD TREDEGAR'S SUPPLEMENTAL ESTATE.—Petition for a Private Bill; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to two English judges 369

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1.) [H.L.]; Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Kesteven, etc.) [H.L.]. Watford Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 369

Clacton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 369

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 369

Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 369

SHREWSBURY CORPORATION WATER BILL RITZ HOTEL, LIMITED.—(Petition for Bill), Crellin's Patents—(Petition for Bill), Poole Corporation Water Bill; Sutton District Water Bill.—Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next 370

Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Bill [H.L.].—Petition for additional provision; of the Scottish Union and National Insurance Company under their Common Seal together with the proposed amendments annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners 370

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 12th of March and the 3rd of April last discharged, and the Bill committed 370

Crediton Lighting and Power Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: the orders made on the 12th of March and the 3rd of April last discharged, and the Bill committed 370

Scottish Provident Institution Buildings Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a}. 370

Midland Railway Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}, and referred to the Examiners 370

Kidderminster Gas Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with amendments; the said amendments considered and agreed to 370

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899.—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lord be proposed to the House as a member of the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz.: Duke of Argyll, agreed to; and the said Lord appointed accordingly 370

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Devon, etc.) Bill [H.L].—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts 1870 to 1903, to enable the councils of the administrative counties of Devon and the West Riding of Yorkshire to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. Was presented by the Lord President (*Earl Crewe*); Read 1a; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 61.) 370

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Turkey, No. 2 (1906).—Further paper respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe (in continuation of Turkey, No. 1. (1906). 371

Trade Reports: Annual Series.—
No. 3567. France (Calais).
No. 3568. Portugal (Beira).
No. 3569. Turkey (Beirut and the Coast of Syria).
No. 3570. Denmark (Iceland). 371

Intermediate Education Board (Ireland).—Annual Report for the year 1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 371

Light Railways Act, 1896.—Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade up to the 31st December, 1905, and of the proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date 371

National School Teachers (Ireland) Pension Fund.—Accounts of receipts and payments in respect of the capital and income of the above fund, for the year ended 31st December, 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 371

Public Health Acts (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]. NOW PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (BUILDING BYE-LAWS) BILL [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments. The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next and Bill to be printed as amended (No. 60) 371

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.—Order of the day for the Second Reading, read and discharged.

THE TIBETAN AGREEMENT.

The Marquess of Lansdowne 372
The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Fitzmaurice*) .. 372

MACEDONIA.

Lord Monkswell 373
Lord Fitzmaurice 373

Seed Potatoes supply (Ireland) Bill.—[SECOND READING.]—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Denman 373

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Denman.*)

Lord Ashbourne 374

On Question, Bill read 2a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

INSURANCE COMPANIES' FUNDS

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire and report what steps should be taken, by deposit of funds or otherwise, to provide adequate security for British policy holders in Life Insurance Companies which have their chief office outside the United Kingdom, but which carry on business in this country."—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

Lord Ashbourne 374
The Earl of Granard 375

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Moved, "That the Lords following be named of the Committee: L. Balfour, L. Stanley of Alderley, L. St. Oswald, L. Grimthorpe, L. Burghclere."—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

The Committee to meet on Monday next, at half-past Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

EGYPTIAN BOUNDARY DISPUTE.

Lord Monkswell 375
Lord Fitzmaurice 375

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 1st MAY, 1906.

The House met at 2.45 p.m.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill. Read a second time, and committed 377

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).—Mr. NUSSEY reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at Eleven of the clock.
Report to lie upon the Table 377

STANDING ORDERS.—Resolution reported from the Select Committee, "That, in the case of the Sutton District Water, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill"

Resolution agreed to 377

London County Buildings Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table 377

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Company to acquire lands for road widenings; to abandon a portion of their authorised tramways; and to construct other works in lieu thereof; to extend the period limited for construction of works and land purchases; to authorise the Corporation of Wigan to purchase portions of tramways; and for other purposes." [Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time for purchasing lands; and for the construction and completion of certain tramways, street widenings, and works authorised by the South Lancashire Tramways Acts 1900, 1901, and 1903; and for other purposes." [South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Sheffield District Railway Company to enter into and carry into effect working and other agreements; and for other purposes." [Sheffield District Railway Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to effect a fusion of the life assurance and annuity business of the National Assurance Company of Ireland with the undertaking of the Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company; and for other purposes." [National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [Lords.] 377

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Sheffield District Railway Bill [Lords]; National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 378

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PETITIONS.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION.—Petition from Fareham, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 378

LAND VALUES TAXATION, ETC. (SCOTLAND), BILL.—Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table 378

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table 379

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—Petitions in favour: From Carlton Main; Church Lane; Frystone; Glasshoughton; Leeds Central (B); Lochgelly; Monk Bretton; New Oaks; Pontefract; Radstock; South Heindley; and Whythemoor Pits Collieries, to lie upon the Table 379

DOGS BILL.—Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table 379

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law: From Alburgh; Aldeburgh on Sea (two); Alton (four); Alverstoke (two); Badwell Ash (two); Bailbrook; Barnsley; Barnstaple and Sherwell; Barton; Bentley; Bentworth (two); Bexhill (two); Bigby (two); Bodiam; Bradford; Brancaster (two); Brierfield; Broadwater Down (two); Broughton; Buckland Dinham; Buckland St. Mary; Buriton; Burmarsh (two); Caundle Purse (two); Charlynch; Cheetham (three); Cheetham Hill; Chilton Moor; Clevedon; Closworth; Combe Down; Creech St. Michael (two); Crookham (two); Crowborough; Dalton le Dale; Denham (two); Eastham; East Malling (two); Easton in Gordano; East Winch (two); Eastwood; Eppleton; Evershot; Ferry Fryston; Foleshill; Frome (three); Frome Selwood; Froxfield; Froyle; Gayton le Marsh; Godmanchester; Greatham; Great Tew; Haverfordwest (three); Hepworth; Herrington; Hersham (two); Holborn; Holcombe; Huddersfield (two); Llanrhian (two); London (three); Lumley; Marnham (two); Morley St. Botolph; New Basford; Nutley; Old Alresford; Paddington (four); Peasemore; Penshaw (two); Playden (two); Ripponden; Rishworth; Rotherfield; Roxby cum Risby; Ryhope (two); Salford (three); Shedfield (two); Silksworth; Souhwark (three); Spaxton; Spitalfields; St. Athan (two); St. Marylebone; Stockport; Stoke Ash; Tenby; Thorn Faulcon (two); Toppesfield; Trent (two); Tunbridge Wells (two); Vaynor (two); Warblington; Waterloo Ashton; Westend; West Hatch; West Malling (two); Weston Bath; Whitechapel; Whitestaunton; Wingfield; Winnick; Wintertotn; Wolborough; and, Yaxley (two); to lie upon the Table 379

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL.—Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table 380

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS ACT (1893) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table 380

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE (UNITED KINGDOM, COLONIES, AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).—Return [presented 27th April] to be printed. [No. 148] 380

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented of Report of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 380

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NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND PENSION FUND).—Annual Accounts presented, of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st December, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 380

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES).—Copy presented, of Judicial Statistics for England and Wales, 1904. Part II. (Civil Judicial Statistics) edited by Sir John Macdonnell, C.B., LL.D., Master of the Supreme Court [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 380

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 30th April; *Mr. Lloyd-George*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 149.] 380

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3567 to 3570 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 380

TURKEY (No. 2, 1906).—Copy presented, of further Paper respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe (in continuation of Turkey (No. 1, 1906) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 380

CASUALTIES TO SHIPS ON THE NAVY LIST.—Return ordered, "of Casualties to Ships on the Navy List, viz. (1) Casualties to Ships; (2) Casualties to engines, during the year ending the 31st day of December, 1905, showing the date, the name and class of the ship damaged, the nature of the accident, time under repair, and the result of any inquiry that may have been held into the circumstances, specifying if a court-martial was held (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 338, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Bellairs.*) 381

LOCAL OPTION (COLONIES).—Address "for Return of the provisions in Colonial Laws by which powers of Local Option in regard to the issue or renewal of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors are conferred upon the inhabitants of British Colonies, showing (1) the licensing authority; (2) the licensing area; (3) the different options submitted to a popular vote, with the proportion of votes required to carry each Option; (4) the persons entitled to vote; (5) the periods at which elections are held."—(*Mr. Leif Jones.*) .. 381

GAS UNDERTAKINGS.—Return ordered, "relating to all authorised Gas Undertakings in the United Kingdom, other than those of Local Authorities for the year ended the 31st day of December, 1905 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 320, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*) 381

GAS UNDERTAKINGS (LOCAL AUTHORITIES).—Return ordered, "relating to all authorised Gas Undertakings in the United Kingdom belonging to Local Authorities for the year ended the 25th day of March, 1906 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 321, of Session 1905)."—*Mr. Lloyd-George* .. 381

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MEDICAL OFFICER FOR DOWNPATRICK POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast) S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 382

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Marine Insurance Bill [LORDS].

Reported, from the Standing Committee on Law, &c., with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 150.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 150.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee) to be taken into consideration upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 182.] 422

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Sir Benjamin Stone, Dr. Macnamara, and Sir Edward Clarke; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Cory, and Sir Robert Ropner.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill: Mr. Osmond Williams, and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Owen Philipps.

Reports to lie upon the Table 422

NEW BILL.

Light Railways Bill.—"To continue and amend The Light Railways Act, 1896," presented by Mr. Lloyd-George; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 181.] 423

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

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TEA.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That there shall be charged, on and after the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and six, until the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and seven, in lieu of the duty now payable on tea, the following Customs import duty on tea (that is to say) :—

Tea - - - - - - - the pound Five pence."
—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) 423
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 424
Mr. Asquith 432
Sir Robert Ropner (*Stockton*) 437
Mr. Cowan (*Surrey, Guildford*) 438
Mr. A. J. Balfour (*City of London*) 441
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 447
Sir William Holland (*Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham*) 450
Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) 452
Mr. Asquith 466

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, that there shall be charged, on and after the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and six, until the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and seven, in lieu of the duty now payable on tea, the following Customs import duty on tea (that is to say) :—

Tea - - - - - - - - the pound Five pence.

—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

[WAYS AND MEANS [30TH APRIL]—REPORT.]

[Mr. EMMOTT, the Deputy Speaker, in the chair.]

Resolution reported.

ALTERATION OF DUTY ON STRIPPED TOBACCO AND OF DRAWBACKS ON TOBACCO.

1. " That for the increase of three pence per pound payable on stripped tobacco under section two of The Finance Act, 1904, there shall, as from the first day of May, nineteen hundred and six, be submitted an increase of one halfpenny per pound ; and that the drawbacks allowed by the same Act on tobacco of the following description shall, as from the twenty-first day of May, nineteen hundred and six, be reduced by the substitution for the ordinary rate set out in the Table of Rates of Drawbacks in the schedule to the said Act of the rate following (that is to say) :—

In the case of cigars - - - - - - - -	the lb.	3	1
,, cigarettes - - - - - - - -	,,	3	0
,, cut, roll, cake, or other manufactured tobacco	,,	2	11
In the case of snuff, not being offal snuff - - - - - -	,,	2	10."

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CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

2. "That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by sections two, three, four, and five of the Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by section five of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and seven."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTIES ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

3. "That the additional Excise duties on beer and spirits imposed by sections six and seven of the Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and seven."

PERMANENT ANNUAL CHARGE.

4. "That the permanent annual charge for the National Debt for the current financial year be twenty-eight and a-half instead of twenty-eight million pounds."

CHINA INDEMNITY.

5. "That it is expedient to authorise the application in like manner as the new sinking fund is applied of any sums paid into the Exchequer on account of the China Indemnity."

INCOME TAX.

6. "That Income Tax shall be charged, for the year beginning the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred and six, at the rate of one shilling in the pound."

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

7. "That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the National Debt, Customs, and Inland Revenue."

Resolutions read a second time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution."

Mr. Harold Cox (*Preston*) 476

Question put, and agreed to.

Remaining Resolutions agreed to; Bill ordered to be brought in by the Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. McKenna

Justices of the Peace (No. 2) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2:—

"In page 1, line 7, to leave out the words 'if otherwise qualified.'"—(*Mr. William Rutherford.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'if otherwise qualified' stand part of the clause."

Mr. William Rutherford (*Liverpool, West Derby*) 476
The Solicitor-General (*Sir W. Robson, South Shields*) 477

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Cave (*Surrey Kingston*) 477

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 10, after the word 'thereof,' to add the words 'or occupies a house or other property in the county.'"—(*Mr. Cave.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir William Robson 478

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 44; Noes, 305. (Division List No. 56.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Sir A. Acland-Hood (*Somersetshire, Wellington*) 481
Sir W. Robson 482
Mr. William Rutherford 482

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 289; Noes, 35. (Division List No. 57.)

Clause 3:—

Mr. Cave 485

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 11, after the word 'solicitor' to insert the words 'if qualified.'"—(*Mr. Cave.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'if qualified' be there inserted."

Lord R. Cecil (*Marylebone, E.*) 487
Colonel Legge (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 487
Mr. William Rutherford 487
Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (*Lanarkshire, N.W.*) 488

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

Cork City Railways and Works Bill. (By Order.)—[Second Reading.]—

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. J. J. O'Shee (Waterford, W.) .. 488
Mr. William O'Brien (Cork) .. 491
Mr. Power (Waterford, E.) .. 492
Captain Craig (Down, E.) .. 494
Captain Donelan (Cork, E.) .. 495
Mr. Mooney (Newry) .. 496
Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) .. 497
Mr. Sheehan (Cork County, Mid.) .. 498
Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid.) .. 498

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Cork and Waterford Railways Bill (by Order).

Cork Link Railways Bill (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed .. 498

Justices of the Peace (No. 2) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[The Deputy-Chairman, Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.) in the Chair.]

Amendment proposed—

" In page 1, line 11, after the word ' solicitor ' to insert the words ' if qualified.' "—(*Mr. Cave.*)

Question again proposed, " That those words be there inserted."

Mr. F. E. Smith .. 499
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) .. 499
Mr. Nield (Middlesex, Ealing) .. 500

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment—

" To insert after the word ' if ' the word ' otherwise.' "—(*Mr. Mitchell-Thomson.*)

Amendment to the proposed Amendment agreed to.

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Question proposed, "That the word, 'if otherwise qualified' be there inserted."

Lord Helmsley (*Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk*) 502

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 47 ; Noes, 297. (Division List No. 58.)

Mr. John Rutherford (*Lancashire, Darwen*) 505
Mr. Courthope (*Sussex, Rye*) 505

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 12, after the word 'county,' to insert the words 'in which he resides.' "—(*Mr. Courthope.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. F. E. Smith 506
Sir W. Robson 506
Colonel Legge (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 507
Lord Dalrymple (*Wigton*) 507
Mr. Mitchell-Thomson 508
Lord Helmsley 508
Mr. William Rutherford 508
Mr. Lane-Fox (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash*) 509

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 54 ; Noes, 317. (Division List No. 59.)

Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 513

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 12, to leave out from the word 'county,' to the end of the Clause.' "—(*Mr. Charles Craig.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out, to the word 'or,' in line 13, stand part of the Clause."

Sir W. Robson 514
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (*Shropshire, Newport*) 515
Sir W. Robson 515
Lord R. Cecil 515
Mr. Lane-Fox 516
Mr. William Rutherford 516

Mr. Solicitor-General rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."
The Committee divided :—Ayes, 310 ; Noes, 52. (Division List No. 60.)

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out, to the word 'or,' in line 13, stand part of the Clause."

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The Committee divided :—Ayes, 318 ; Noes, 46. (Division List No. 61.)

And, it being after Eleven of the clock, the Chairman proceeded to interrupt the business.

Whereupon Mr. Solicitor-General claimed, " That the Question ' That the Clause stand part of the Bill ' be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 304 ; Noes, 52. (Division List No. 62.)

Question put accordingly, " That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 295 ; Noes, 42. (Division List No. 63.)

Whereupon the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this day.

Drunkenness (Ireland) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged :—Bill withdrawn 532

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, MAY 2ND, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed 533

Cathcart District Railway (Superfluous Lands) Order Confirmation Bill ; North Berwick Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. Considered ; to be read the third time upon Friday 533

Water Provisional Order Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade under The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Poole Water." Presented by Mr. Kearley ; supported by Mr. Lloyd-George ; read the first time ; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 183.] 533

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—" To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Beckenham, Oswaldtwistle, Rochdale Rochford (Rural), and Warrington," presented by Mr. Runciman ; supported by Mr. John Burns ; read the first time ; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 184.] 533

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to the Bury Saint Edmunds Incorporation," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Mr. John Burns; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed [Bill 185.] 533

Cork City Railways and Works Bill.—Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Cork Junction Railways Bill in Session 1905 be referred to the Committee on the Cork City Railways and Works Bill.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 533

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—Petitions in favour; From Aber; Britannic; Brynsheffrey; Gilfach Goch; Liversedge; Netherton; Old Hill; Quarry Bank; Shireoaks and Steetley; and, Wyke Collieries; to lie upon the Table 534

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Addington; Ash next Sandwich (two); Ashton; Bedminster; Birkenhead; Bosham; and New Fishbourne; Bishopston (two); Caterham; Caterham Valley; Cheetham; Childrey; Chillenden; Chiswick (two); Dudley; Edge Lane; Felpham; Felpham and Middleton; Goodrich; Grasmere (two); Great Toller; Hammersmith (six); Haxey; Heathfield; Hertingfordbury (two); Hillmorton; Hinckley; Hoar Cross (two); Hythe; Ingoldmells; Isle of Elmley (two); Islington; Kingstone and Thruxton (two); Linton; Liverpool; Llangarron; Llanwarne; London (three); Loppington; Lymington (two); Merton (two); Mildenhall; New Fishbourne; Northbourne; Oving; Peterchurch; Ramsgate (two); Ravenscourt Park; Ravenstonedale; Reading; Rochester (two); Ryde; Salesbury (two); Shepherd's Bush; Staines; Stanford; Stanford with Postling; Stanley (two); Stodmarsh; Tilmanstone; Turner's Hill; Tyringham cumFilgrave; Wakefield; Wellington Heath (two); Westbere (two); Westhampnett; West Kensington; Weston Subedge; Woburn; Wollaton; and, York; to lie upon the Table 534

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—Petition from Sarum and Wilts, against; to lie upon the Table 534

LAND VALUES TAXATION, &c. (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Aberdeen, against; to lie upon the Table 534

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Aberdeen, against; to lie upon the Table 534

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Edinburgh; and, Scottish Executive of the British Women's Temperance Association; to lie upon the Table 535

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL.—Petition from Westminster, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 535

SALE OF COKE BILL.—Petition from Cambridge, in favour; to lie upon the Table 535

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition of the Scottish National Sabbath Union, in favour; to lie upon the Table 535

VAGRANT CHILDREN BILL.—Petition from Bloomsbury, against; to lie upon the Table. 535

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DRUMDOE, COUNTY ROSCOMMON (INQUIRY).—Return [presented April 30th] to be printed. [No. 151] 535

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHER (IRELAND) PENSION FUND.—Account [presented May 1st] to be printed. [No. 152] 535

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 153.] 535

GAS COMPANIES (METROPOLIS).—Copy presented, of Accounts of the Metropolitan Gas Companies for the year 1905 [[by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 154.] 535

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address, April 30th; *Mr. Robert Price*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 155.] 535

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOURERS) (CRIMES).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address, February 21st; *Mr. Mackarness*]; to lie upon the Table .. 536

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.—Return ordered, "showing (1) names of Judicial and other Commissioners, of the Legal and Lay Assistants and Assessors in connection with the Land Commission holding office on the 1st day of January, 1906; (2) date of original appointment; (3) date upon which appointment expires; (4) age of appointment; (5) residence at time of appointment; (6) locality in which practical experience of land was acquired; (7) where educated; (8) previous occupation; (9) acreage of land farmed; (10) whether held as owner or tenant; (11) what other experience in agriculture; and (12) what experience in valuing, mapping, and surveying (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 151, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Dillon.*) .. 536

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WORKING HOURS IN ROYAL DOCKYARDS.—Question, Mr. J. Williams Benn (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson.. 536

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BRITISH SHIPPING—WAR GUARANTEE.—Question, Mr. Bellairs; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.. 579

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION [EXPENSES].—Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration and expenses incurred under any Act of the present session to consolidate and amend the Law with respect to Compensation to Workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment, and of Compensation to Workmen employed by or under the Crown in pursuance of such Act (King's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*) 579

SELECTION [STANDING COMMITTEES].—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Mr. Ellis Griffith and Mr. Lehmann; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Mond and Mr. Spicer.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Sir Francis Lowe and Mr. Flynn: and had appointed in substitution:—Mr. F. E. Smith and Mr. Edward Dunn.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Mr. Swift MacNeill: and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Havelock Wilson.

Reports to lie upon the Table 579

Electric Power and Supply Bills.—Ordered, That the Memorandum by the Commissioners of Works on Electric Power and Supply Bills be referred to the Committees on the St. Pancras Electricity Bill, the Twickenham and Teddington Electric Supply Bill, the London Southern Tramways Bill, and the Edinburgh Corporation Bill.—(*Mr. Harcourt.*) 580

NEW BILLS.

Indian Railways Act Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Indian Railways Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Ellis ; supported by Mr. Secretary Morley ; to be read a second time upon Thursday, May 10th, and to be printed. [Bill 186] 580

PLURAL VOTING.—

The First Commissioner of Works (*Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rosendale*) 580

Motion made and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to impose a penalty on a Parliamentary elector, registered in more than one constituency, who votes in any constituency except that selected for the purpose"—(*Mr. Harcourt*)

Sir William Anson (*Oxford University*) 584

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 327; Noes, 66. (Division List No. 64.)

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Harcourt, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Runciman.

Plural Voting Bill.—"To impose a penalty on a Parliamentary elector registered in more than one constituency, who votes in any constituency except that selected for the purpose," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 187.]

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL COMMITTEE.—Ordered That Mr. Nolan be discharged, and Mr. Dolan be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

WAYS AND MEANS [1ST MAY.]

Resolution reported.

TEA.

"That there shall be charged, on and after the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and six, until the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and seven, in lieu of the duty now payable on tea, the following Customs import duty on tea (that is to say) :—

Tea - - - - - - - - the pound Five-pence."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) 590
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) 591

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Gentlemen appointed to bring in a Bill upon the Resolutions reported from the Committee of Ways and Means on the 1st day of this instant May, and then agreed to by the House, that they do make provision therein pursuant to the said Resolution.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Finance Bill.—"To grant certain duties of Customs and Inland Revenue, to alter other duties, and to amend the Law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue and the National Debt, and to make other provisions for the financial arrangements of the year," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next. and to be printed. [Bill 188.]

Justice of the Peace (No. 2) Bill.—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clause 4 :—

Motion made, Question proposed, "That Clause 4 stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (*Lanarkshire, N.W.*) 592
The Solicitor-General (*Sir W. Robson, South Shields*) 592
Mr. Cochrane (*Ayrshire, W.*) 593
Mr. Younger (*Ayr Burghs*) 393
Mr. William Rutherford (*Liverpool, West Derby*) 593
The Lord Advocate (*Mr. Thomas Shaw, Hawick Burghs*) 594
Mr. Mitchell-Thomson 594
Mr. Akers-Douglas (*Kent, St. Augustine's*) 595
Mr. Arthur Henderson (*Durham, Barnard Castle*) 595
Mr. F. E. Smith (*Liverpool, Walton*) 596
Mr. J. Ward (*Stoke-on-Trent*) 596
Mr. Higham (*Yorks, W.R., Sowerby*) 597
Mr. Crooks (*Woolwich*) 598
Mr. Samuel Evans (*Glamorganshire, Mid.*) 598

Sir W. Robson 599
Col. Williams (Dorsetshire, W.) 601
Mr. F. E. Smith 602
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim. S.) 602
Mr. Maddison (Burnley) 604
Mr. John Johnson (Gateshead) 604

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 355; Noes, 82. (Division List No. 65).

Clauses 5 to 7 agreed to.

Mr. Brown (Glamorganshire, S.) 609

New clause—

"Any person qualified to be elected mayor of a municipal authority or chairman of a county council, urban or rural district council, or other like authority, and who, in fact, has been elected and served in the office of mayor for one year, or in the office of chairman as aforesaid for one year, shall be a permanent Justice of the Peace with all the rights and privileges appertaining to that office."

Brought up and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the Clause be now read a second time."

Sir W. Robson 610
Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) 611
Mr. Wm. Rutherford 611
Mr. Arthur Henderson 612
Mr. Samuel Evans 614
Mr. Brace 615
Mr. Cave (Surrey, Kingston) 615
Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) 616
Mr. Lane Fox 617
Mr. Barnard (Kidderminster) 619
Mr. Maddison 619
Mr. Blake (Longford, S.) 620

Question put and negatived.

Mr. Luttrell (Devonshire, Tavistock) 621

New clause:—

"The chairman of a board of guardians and the chairman of a parish council, unless personally disqualified, by any Act shall be by virtue of his office justice of the peace for the county in which the district is situate, in the same way as a chairman of a district council becomes a justice of the peace."—(*Mr. Luttrell.*)

Brought up and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

Sir Wm. Robson 623
Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe) 624

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Mr. Channing (*Northamptonshire, E.*) 625
Mr. Dunn (*Cornwall, Camborne*) 625
Sir Brampton Gurdon (*Norfolk, N.*) 626
Mr. O'Hara (*Monaghan, N.*) 626

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 59 ; Noes, 315. (Division List No. 66.)

Schedules agreed to .. ..

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report the Bill without Amendment to the House."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 314 ; Noes, 37. (Division List No. 67.)

Bill reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Reserve Forces Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

Lord Balcarres (*Lancashire, Chorley*) 633
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Haldane, Haddington*) 634

Clause 2 and remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Seamen's and Soldiers' False Characters Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 .—

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

Mr. Haldane 635

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 635
Mr. George Faber 636

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the Clock, further proceeding was postponed without Question put pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

ARMY RECRUITING.

Major Seely (*Liverpool, Abercromby*) 636
Mr. Guest (*Cardiff District*) 640

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That under the present system large numbers of men are recruited for the regular infantry who cannot become efficient soldiers, while at the same time it is found difficult to obtain the number placed on the Estimates; and that, in the opinion of this House, an amendment of the existing system is urgently required."—(*Major Seely.*)

Mr. Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) 644
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Haldane, Haddington*) 650
Captain Kincaid Smith (*Warwickshire, Stratford-upon-Avon*) 657
Colonel Sandys (*Lancashire, Bootle*) 660

Amendment proposed—

"At the end, to add the words 'and any such Amendment should include the introduction of physical drill of a military character in our schools.'"—(*Captain Kincaid-Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 662
Mr. Seddon (*Lancashire, Newton*) 663
Dr. Macnamara (*Camberwell, N.*) 665
Sir William Anson (*Oxford University*) 667
Mr. Rees (*Montgomery Boroughs*) 667

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Aliens Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow 668

Seamen's and Soldiers' False Characters Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1:

Question again proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Committee report progress; to sit again upon Monday next 668

Adjourned at Ten minutes after Eleven o'clock.

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HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 3RD, MAY 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

The Earl of Morley sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bute (English and Welsh) Estates Bill [H.L.].—Judges' Report received; Bill presented, and read 1ª. 669

Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Morley be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Ravensworth; read and agreed to 669

Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 669

Dowlais Gas Bill; Merthyr Tydfil Gas Bill. Read 2ª, and committed 669

Manchester Churches Bill [H.L.]; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.]; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Kent Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone, Sandgate and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone, Sandgate and Hythe Tramways (No. 2.) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz:—D. Wellington, E. Mayo, V. Falmouth, L. Suffield, L. Brougham and Vaux (Chairman); agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly The Committee to meet on Thursday next at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 669

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 62).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Charing Gas, Chichester Gas, Corsham Gas, Farnham Gas, and Kings Lynn Gas 669

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 63).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Newport Pagnell Gas, Pontardulais Gas, Raunds Gas, Redditch Gas, and Saint Austell Gas 670

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. (No. 64).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Bolsover and District Water, Great Grimsby Gas, Great Grimsby Water, Hoylake and West Kirby Water, Wath-upon-Dearne and District Gas, and Wollaston Gas .. 670

Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. (No. 65).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Herne Bay Water, Maidstone Water, Mid-Kent Water, Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water, Sleaford and District Water and Slough Water 670

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Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.] (No. 66).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Altrincham Urban District Council Tramways, Dewsbury Corporation Tramways, Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Tramways, Ossett Corporation Tramways, Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Port Seaton Extension), and Rochdale Corporation Tramways .. 670

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 67).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts 1882 and 1888, the Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and the Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Bellshill, Blantyre, Bothwell, Dumfermline and District, Dunoon, Fochabers, Inveresk, Shettleston, and Pollcross and Uddingston : And 670

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 68).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts 1882 and 1888, relating to Aylesbury, Boston, Castleward, Weetslade, and Cramlington, Godalming (Extension), Gomersal, Henley-on-Thames, Pinner, Stanmore, Harrow, Weald, and Edgware, Ryton, Swanage, Wantage and District.—Were presented by the Lord Granard (*E. Granard*); read 1^{a}; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners 670

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Trade Reports, Annual Series.—No. 3571. China (Ichang) ; No. 3572. Switzerland 671

Congested District (Scotland) Act, 1897.—Eighth Annual Report of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board to the Secretary for Scotland 671

Judicial Statistics (England and Wales) 1904 (Part II. Civil Judicial Statistics).—Statistics relating to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the House of Lords, the Supreme Court of Judicature, County Courts and other Civil Courts, edited by Sir John Macdonnell, C.B., LL.D., a Master of the Supreme Court.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 671

Intermediate Education (Ireland).—Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1907 671

Gas Companies (Metropolis).—Accounts of the Metropolitan Gas Companies for the year 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 671

Education.—Petitions in favour of the maintenance of existing religious teaching in Church of England schools of St. Annes, Clifton—and Radcliffe, St. Andrews ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 671

Jurors.—Petition in favour of payment of jurors attending Quarter Sessions ; of Justices of the Peace for Essex ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table .. 671

Public Health Acts (Building Bye-Laws) Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^{a} To-morrow 671

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Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill.

House in Committee (according to Order)

(The Earl of Onslow in the Chair).

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 :—

Lord Denman 671

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 2, page 2, line 40, after ('seven') to insert ('Provided that where the first ordinary poor rate made during the year 1906 was made before the passing of this Act, and the first special rate was not made therewith, then the amount of the instalment payable by any purchaser which would have been leviable by that rate shall be added to the amount of the second instalment payable by him, and the total amount of both instalments shall be levied by the special rate made at the same time as the first ordinary poor rate made during the year 1907.')"—(*Lord Denman*).

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3, agreed to.

Clause 4 :

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 4, page 3, line 16, after ('union') to insert ('and any rate made before the passing of this Act which would have been valid if this Act had previously passed.')"—(*Lord Denman*).

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to; and Bill reported with Amendments to the House.

Moved, that the Standing Committee be negatived.—(*Lord Denman*).

Lord Oranmore and Browne 673
Lord Denman 673
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 673
The Marquess of Lansdowne 674
The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 674
Lord Ashbourne 674

On Question, Standing Committee negatived.

The Report of Amendments to be received to-morrow; and Bill to be printed as amended. [No. 69].

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 676
Lord Ashbourne 677
The Earl of Crewe 677

CRIMINAL APPEAL.

Lord Ashbourne 680

Moved, for a Return of all Criminal Appeal Bills introduced since the year 1843, showing—

Date of Introduction.	How far it Proceeded.	By whom Introduced.	Whether it gave an Appeal on (*a*) Law; (*b*) Facts; (*c*) Sentence.	Whether it permitted (*a*) a new trial to be ordered; (*b*) an increase of sentence.	What Tribunal was to hear the Appeals.

—(*Lord Ashbourne.*)

The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 681

On Question, Motion, as amended, agreed to.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 3RD MAY, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE.)—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—

Marriages Provisional Order Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow 681

Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 682

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Sutton District Water Bill.—" For the preservation of the sources of water supply of the Sutton District Water Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 682

Romford and District Tramways Bill.—Order [24th April] that the Romford and District Tramways Bill be committed, read and discharged: Bill withdrawn—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 682

Peterborough Gas Bill.—Rochester, Chatham, and Strood Gas Bill; Southampton Gas Bill, reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 682

Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 682

H. R. Baines and Company Bill [Lords], reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table

Bill to be read the third time 682

Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table

Bill to be read the third time 683

London and South Western Railway Bill.—Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 683

Railway Bills (Group 4).—Sir George Doughty reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next at half-past Eleven of the clock ..

Report to lie upon the Table 683

South Metropolitan Gas Bill.—Reported [Parties do not proceed]; Report to lie upon the Table 683

Private Bills (Group F.).—Major Seely reported from the Committee on Group F. of Private Bills; That for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 683

Public Petitions Committee.—Third report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 683

Message from the Lords.—That they have agreed to Amendments to Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords], without Amendment 683

PETITIONS.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Crigglestone; Derbyshire; Don Pedro; Moresby; Nostell; and, Thornhill Collieries; to lie upon the Table 683

Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Petition from Sunderland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 683

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EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; From Arundel; Beachampton; Bedwardine; Bethnal Green; Biddestone cum Slaughterford (two); Bradenstoke cum Clack; Budleigh Salterton; Cheriton; Chippenham; Chipping Campden (two); Claines; Clee and Cleethorpes; Compton cum up Marden (two); Crofton; Dorset; Eton; Felton Common; Finsbury Park; Freemantle; Great Houghton; Great Somerford; Hartley Manditt (two); Hawley (two); Hockliffe; Hornsey (two); Huddersfield (two); Hythe (two); Kensington; Knelston and Llanddewi (two); Lichfield; Llanwrytyd; London; Monkwearmouth; Montgomery (two); Morpeth; Newick; Newington next Folkestone; Norden; Oldwood near Tenbury; Otterton; Preston (two); Ratcliffe; Rumboldswhyke; St. Pancras; Saltwood; Seagry; Seaton; South Bersted; Stanley; Stockport (two); Tarrant Hinton; Tortington; Upham; West Clandon (two); Wood Green (two); Worcester; and Worthen; to lie upon the Table 684

ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.—Petition from Huddersfield, against; to lie upon the Table 684

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Kingston (Glasgow), in favour; to lie upon the Table 684

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Kingston (Glasgow), in favour; to lie upon the Table 684

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TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOURERS) (CRIMES).—Returns [presented 2nd May] to be printed. [No. 156.] 385

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.—Copy presented, of Eighth Annual Report of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board to the Secretary for Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 685

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3571 and 3572 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 685

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS IN CERTAIN URBAN AREAS IN ENGLAND AND WALES.—Copy presented, of Statement showing number of Voluntary Schools on 1st January, 1906, in Urban Areas, with a population of 5,000 and over, in England and Wales respectively, and their average attendance for statistical

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year ended 31st July, 1904, with approximate percentages to the total number and average attendance of all the Voluntary Schools in England and Wales for the same period [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 685

TREES (IRELAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 5th April; *Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh*]; to lie upon the Table 685

ASSESSMENT OF REAL ESTATE ON THE BASIS OF ITS MARKET VALUE.—Copy ordered, " of Translation of Prussian State Documents as to the introduction of the Assessment of Real Estate on the basis of its Market Value for local purposes; Circular of Minister of Finance and Minister of Interior of the 2nd day of October, 1902, and Model regulations therein referred to; Memorandum of 1904; and Extracts from statistical tables accompanying it."—(*Mr. Runciman*) 685

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PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE'S REPORTS.—Question, Mr. Chiozza Money (Paddington); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 741

CROFTERS BILL.—Question, Mr. Morton (Sutherland); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 741

THE PRIME MINISTER.—Question, Mr. Paul (Northampton), and Mr. Paul; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 742

SCOTTISH SUPPLY.—Question, Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire): Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 743

CHURCH ENDOWMENTS IN WALES.—Question, Mr. Ellis Griffith; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 743

DEPOPULATION OF RURAL DISTRICTS.—Question, Mr. Bridgeman (Shropshire, Oswestry); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 744

NEW BILLS.

London Traffic Board Bill.—"To establish a London Traffic Board," presented by Sir John Dickson-Poynder, to be read a second time upon Monday, May 28th, and to be printed. [Bill 189.] 744

Land Values Taxation, etc. (Scotland) Bill.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland be a Member of the Select Committee on the Land Values Taxation, etc. (Scotland) Bill:—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Mr. Harold Cox (*Preston*) 745

The Parliamentary Secretary of the Treasury (*Mr. George Whiteley, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey*) 746

Question put, and agreed to.

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Mr. Hugh Barrie, Mr. Arthur Dewar, Mr. Findlay, Mr. John Henderson, Mr. McKillop, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, Mr. O'Hare, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Dundas White, Mr. Wood, and Mr. Younger nominated other Members of the Select Committee.

Ordered, "That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records."

Ordered, "That five be the quorum."—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

SUPPLY [7TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906–7.

CLASS III.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £124,215, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Irish Land Commission."

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 748

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £124,115, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Mr. Hayden (*Roscommon, S.*) 756
Mr. T. W. Russell (*Tyrone, S.*) 762
Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*) 771
Mr. Paul (*Northampton*) 775
Mr. Ginnell (*Westmeath, N.*) 779
Mr. Fetherstonhaugh (*Fermanagh, N.*) 794
Mr. Meagher (*Kilkenny, N.*) 799

And it being a quarter-past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

The House resumed.

Lancashire Electric Power Bill.—(BY ORDER.)

Read a second time and committed.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid.) in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £124,215, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Land Commission."

Whereupon Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £124,115, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Mr. Meagher 801
Sir Thomas Esmonde (*Wexford, N.*) 802
Mr. O'Shee (*Waterford, W.*) 803
Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (*Kerry. W.*) 808
Mr. O'Malley (*Galway, Connemara*) 809
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.*) 810
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 818
Mr. Barrie (*Londonderry, N.*) 823

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress, to sit again upon Monday next.

Education of Defective Children (Scotland) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for Monday next 824

Adjourned at five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 4TH MAY, 1906.

The Lord Silchester (*E. Longford*)—Took the Oath 825

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Huddersfield Corporation; Carlisle Corporation; Todmorden Corporation; Great Eastern Railway; Bacup Corporation; Cardiff Gas; North East Lincolnshire Water; Thornton Urban District Gas; New Mills Urban District Council; Uxbridge Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 825

Shrewsbury Corporation Water Bill; Poole Corporation Water Bill. The order of Tuesday last referring the Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders to the Standing Orders Committee, discharged 825

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 825

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Bury Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 825

Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 825

Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Electric Supply) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 12th of March and 3rd of April last discharged, and Bill committed 825

County of Durham Electric Power Suply Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 12th of March and 3rd April of last, discharged and Bill committed 825

Newport Harbour Commissioners Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 19th of March and the 3rd of April last, discharged, and Bill committed 826

Watford Gas Bill.—Read 2a, and committed 826

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.].—Read 3a, and passed, and sent to the Commons 826

Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1a; and referred to the Examiners 826

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Kesteven, etc.) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2a (according to order) 826

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of maintenance of existing religious teaching in Church of England schools of—

Parents and guardians of children attending schools at Bolton, Holy Trinity—Accrington, St. John's.

Teachers in a school at Accrington, St. John's. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 826

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (BUILDING BYE-LAWS) BILL. [H.L.].—Petition in favour of; of Royal Sanitary Institute. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table .. 826

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS).—Statements showing number of voluntary schools on 1st January, 1906 in urban areas with a population of 5,000 and over in England and Wales respectively, and their average attendance for statistical year ended 31st July, 1904, with approximate percentages to the total number and average attendance of all the voluntary schools in England and Wales for the same period 827

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade.

I. Authorising the construction of Light Railways in the county of Lincoln from Blyton to Frodingham urban districts of Enfield and Edmonton in the county of Middlesex; urban district of Cheshunt in the county of Hertford; county of Somerset from Blagdon to Pensford.

II. Authorising a deviation in the parish of Swadlingcote in the urban district of Swadlingcote district in the county of Derby, of a part of Railway (No. 1), authorised by the Burton and Ashby Light Railway Order, 1903.

III. Authorising the working of branch lines of the North Staffordshire Railway as light railways under the Light Railways Act, 1896.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 827

RATEABLE HEREDITAMENTS.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 827

Moved, "That there be laid before the House a Return showing for each union in England and Wales (*a*) the gross estimated rental, and (*b*) the rateable value in 1899 and in 1906 of (i) All rateable hereditaments, and (ii.) railways included in (i.) (the term 'railways' to include stations and depots)."—*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Earl Carrington*) 829

On Question, agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

POPLAR BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 829
Earl Carrington 833

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN SCHOOLS.

The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 835

Moved, "That there be laid before the House, a Return showing in respect of each Local Education Authority in England and Wales under Part III. of the Education Act, 1902—

1. The Regulations or Syllabus for Religious Instruction put forth for the use of its Council Schools, and the date on which they were issued.

2. In the absence of such Regulations of Syllabus, any Resolution of the Authority on the subject, and its date.

3. Whether the Authority leaves Individual Council Schools free to depart from the Regulations or Syllabus.

4. Any information now in the possession of the Local Education Authority as to the Religious Instruction, other than that under its own Regulations or Syllabus, given in individual Council Schools.

5. What arrangements the Local Authority makes for the inspection of the Religious Instruction in its Council Schools."—(*The Lord President.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

Solicitors' Bill [H.L.] [SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Alverstone 836

Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*Lord Alverstone.*)

On Question, Bill read 2a (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Tuesday next.

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Earl of Granard 837

Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Granard*).

On Question, Bill read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Public Health Acts (Building Bye-Laws) Bill [H.L.)—Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Lord Hylton 837

Order for the Third Reading, by leave of the House, postponed.

Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill.—Amendments reported (according to Order) ; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : FRIDAY, 4TH MAY, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Cathcart District Railway (Superfluous Lands) Order Confirmation Bill; North Berwick Corporation Order Confirmation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 838

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Marriages Provisional Order Bill.—Read a second time, and committed .. 838

Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Arlecdon and Frizington, Liverpool, and Marsden," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Mr. John Burns; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 190] 838

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 6) Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to Smethwick," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Mr. John Burns; read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 191] 838

Mid-Oxfordshire Gas Bill.—Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table.. 838

St. Pancras Electricity Bill.—Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 838

Bethnal Green Borough Council Superannuation Bill [Lords].—Reported without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill to be read the third time 838

Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed 838

PETITIONS.

Allotments (London) Bill.—Petition from West Norwich, in favour; to lie upon the Table 838

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Chidswell and Shawcross; Harrington Pits; St. Helen's; South Derbyshire; Topcliffe; and Wollescote Collieries; to lie upon the Table 839

Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 839

Education (England and Wales) Bill (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Balderstone; Barnsley; Belton; Biddisham; Birmingham (two); Bishops Sutton; Brighton (three); Brindle; Bush Hill; Bush Hill Park; Carnforth; Cheadle; Chequerbent; Clay Hill; Disley; Durley (two); Eaton; Edmonton; Enfield (four); Enfield Highway; Eton Wick; Farnham (two); Farnworth (three); Foots Cray and Chislehurst (two); Forty Hill (two); Friern Barnet; Handforth; Hastings (five); Haverfordwest (two); Hawkley (two); Heptonstall and Hepden Bridge; Higher Sutton; Hinton Ampner; Holmfirth (three); Hulme Watfield; Hulton; Hunwick (two); Kelloe; Kilmeston with Beanworth (two); Kirkdale; Lambeth; Lane End (two); Lanteglos-by-Fowey; Llandewi Rhydderch; Macclesfield (three); Manchester; Mathry (two); Medstead; Minwear and Newton Norton; Moreton-cum-Alcumlow; Newbold Astbury (two); Peniston (three); Pilton; Preston (Sussex) (two); Privett (two); Reddish (two); Ripponden; Rowledge; St. Nicholas; Silver Hill; Slebech (two); Sowerby; Stoneygate (two); Sunderland; Sutton; The Lickey; Toxteth Park; Tretower (two); Waltham Cross (two); Wield; Wilmslow (three); Winch; Winchmore Hill; and Wythal; to lie upon the Table .. 839

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LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Greenock, in favour; to lie upon the Table 839

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.—Petition from Westgate and Sleaford, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table 839

WAGES BOARDS BILL.—Petition of the Personal Rights Association, against; to lie upon the Table 840

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TREES (IRELAND).—Return [presented May 3rd] to be printed. [No. 157] .. 840

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Urban District Council of Rhondda, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Barbers' Shops within the District [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 840

RAILWAY RETURNS (PRELIMINARY STATEMENT).—Copy presented, of Return relating to the Railways of the United Kingdom for the year 1905 (Preliminary Statement) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 840

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising a deviation in the parish of Swadlincote, in the urban district of Swadlincote District, in the county of Derby, of a part of Railway No. 1 authorised by the Burton and Ashby Light Railway Order, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Somerset from Blagdon to Pensford [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Lincoln from Blyton to Frodingham [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the urban district of Cheshunt, in the county of Hertford [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the urban districts of Enfield and Edmonton, in the county of Middlesex [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the working of Branch Lines of the North Staffordshire Railway as Light Railways under The Light Railways Act, 1896 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 840

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PURCHASE OF THE ESTATE OF CHARLES D. O'RORKE, NEAR TUAM, COUNTY GALWAY.—Question, Mr. Hazleton (Galway, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 841

GRAZING LAND ON THE GOLDING ESTATE.—Question, Mr. Hazleton; Answer, Mr. Bryce 842

MALARIAL FEVER.—Question, Major Seely (Liverpool, Abercromby); Answer, Mr. Churchill 842

DISCIPLINE OF THE NAVY.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 843

DUTIES OF THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL.—Question, Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 843

APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION OF CUSTOMS OFFICERS.—Questions, Mr. C. Duncan (Barrow-in-Furness); Answers, Mr. McKenna 844

POSTAL SERVANTS AND NOTICE OF ALTERATION OF DUTY.—Question, Mr. E. Edwards (Hanley); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 848

EDUCATION EXPENDITURE.—Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, W.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 849

IRISH SCHOOL BUILDING PLANS.—Question, Mr. Wm. Abraham (Cork County, N.E.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 850

RE-INSTATEMENT OF EVICTED TENANTS—CASE OF MR. GEORGE WARD.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 850

IRISH SALMON FISHERIES—USE OF DRIFT NETS.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law; Answer, Mr. Bryce 850

Light Dues (Abolition) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Sir Robert Ropner (*Stockton*) 851
Mr. W. R. Rea (*Scarborough*) 855

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Robert Ropner.*)

Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 858
Mr. Harold Cox (*Preston*) 860

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now," and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. David MacIver (*Liverpool, Kirkdale*) 862
Mr. J. M. Robertson (*Northumberland, Tyneside*) 863
Mr. Seddon (*Lancashire, Newton*) 865

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Mr. J. D. White (*Dumbartonshire*) 867
Mr. Byles (*Salford, N.*) 868
Mr. W. Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 869
Mr. R. Balfour (*Lanarkshire, Partick*) 870
Mr. Wilkie (*Dundee*) 872
Mr. Ridsdale (*Brighton*) 873
Mr. Joyce (*Limerick*) 874
Mr. Cairns (*Newcastle-on-Tyne*) 875
Mr. Maddison (*Burnley*) 876
The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon*) .. 878
Mr. Barrie (*Londonderry, N.*) 882
Sir Christopher Furness (*Hartlepool*) 883
Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) 885
Major Seely (*Liverpool, Abercromby*) 888
Mr. O'Grady (*Leeds, E.*) 889
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 890

Question put.

The House divided : Ayes, 142 ; Noes, 169. (Division List No. 68.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

Rating of Machinery Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Bright (*Oldham*) 893

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Bright.*)

Mr. J. Johnson (*Gateshead*) 896
Lord Willoughby de Eresby (*Lincolnshire, Horncastle*) 899

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out the word ' now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words ' upon this day six months.' "—(*Mr. J. Johnson.*)

Question proposed, " That the word ' now ' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Stuart (*Sunderland*) 901
Mr. R. Duncan (*Lanarkshire, Govan*) 903
Mr. Fenwick *Northumberland, Wansbeck*) 904
Mr. Charles Roberts (*Lincoln*) 905
Mr. Myer (*Lambeth, N.*) 906
Mr. Summerbell (*Sunderland*) 907
Mr. Lupton (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 908
Mr. J. D. White (*Dumbartonshire*) 908
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board (*Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury*) 910

And, it being Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

Vaccination Prosecutions.—Bill to provide that no Prosecution under the Vaccination Acts shall be commenced without the authority of the guardians, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Channing, Mr. Goddard, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Corrie Grant, and Mr. Bill.

Vaccination Prosecutions Bill.—"To provide that no Prosecutions under the Vaccination Acts shall be commenced without the authority of the guardians," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 192.] 911

Income Tax.—Select Committee appointed to inquire into and report upon the practicability of graduating the Income Tax, and of differentiating, for the purpose of the tax, between permanent and precarious incomes:

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. Beach, Mr. Brace, Mr. Bridgeman, Mr. Cavendish, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Evans, Mr. George Faber, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Hayden, Sir William Holland, Sir Seymour King, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. McKenna, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Rose, Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. Whittaker.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Whereupon Mr. Speaker, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put 912

Adjourned at six minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 7TH MAY, 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

The Marquess of Anglesey sat first in Parliament after the death of his kinsman 913

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Lord Tredegar's Supplemental Estate Bill [H.L.].—Judges' report received; Bill presented, and read 1a. 913

Standing Orders Committee—Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petitions for Bills by the Ritz Hotel, Limited; John Cæsar Crellin; ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bills.

And that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Sutton District Water Bill ought to be dispensed with. Read, and agreed to 913

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The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Macclesfield and District Tramways ; Midland Railway

And also the certificate that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in respect of the petition for additional revision in the following Bill :—Scottish Union and National Insurance [H.L.]

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 913

Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 913

Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 913

Manchester Churches Bill [H.L.], Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Folkestone and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.] ; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.] ; Kent Electric Power Bill [H.L.] ; Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1.) Bill [H.L.] ; Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Willoughby de Broke and the Lord Dunboyne be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Mayo and the Viscount Falmouth ; read, and agreed to 914

Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.], Read 3a, and passed, and sent to the Commons 914

Cathcart District Railway (Superfluous Lands) Order Confirmation Bill ; North Berwick Corporation Order Confirmation Bill, brought from the Commons 914

Cathcart District Railway (Superfluous Lands) Order Confirmation Bill (No. 73) ; North Berwick Corporation Order Confirmation Bill (No. 74). Read 1a ; to be printed ; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been read 2a (The Lord Hamilton of Dalzell), and reported from the Committee 914

PETITIONS.

Education.—Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools. (1). Of teachers in schools at Phillack—Salmesbury—St. Peter's —and Ashton-under-Lyne (2). Of parents and guardians of children at Salmesbury—and Ashton-under-Lyne (2).

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 914

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Education (Scotland).—General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland, for the year 1905 915

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Royal College of Science.—Final Report of the Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Science, etc. Vol. II. Minutes of Evidence, Appendices—(II. XIII.), and Index 915

Natal.—Correspondence relating to native disturbances in Natal 915

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—

No. 3573. Egypt (Port Said and Suez).
No. 3574. Russia (Moscow).
No. 3575. Russia (Finland
No. 3576. China (Swatow).
No. 3577. Turkey (Trebizond).
No. 3578. Chna (Hankow). 915

Army (Military Prisons).—Report on the discipline and management of the military prisons, 1905 915

Railway Returns.—Return relating to the railways of the United Kingdom for the year 1905. Preliminary statement 915

Education Commissioners (Ireland).—Annual Report for the year 1905 .. 915

Public Records.—Sixty-seventh Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records 915

Railway Rates (Preferential Treatment).—Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to inquire and report whether preferential treatment is given by the railway companies in Great Britain to foreign and colonial, as compared with home, farm, dairy, and market garden produce. Report; Minutes of evidence, with appendices and index 915

International Agricultural Institute.—Correspondence relative to the establishment of an international agricultural institute, with the Report of the British delegates and the Minutes of the proceedings at the International Conference on agriculture at Rome 916

Licensing Statistics.—Statistics as to the operation and administration of the laws relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors, for the year 1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 916

Polling Districts (County of Durham).—Order made by the council of the county of Durham altering certain polling districts in the Chester-le-Street Parliamentary division of the country 916

Shop Hours Act, 1904 (Rhondda Urban District).—Order made by the urban district council of Rhondda, confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain shops within the district 916

Superannuation.

Treasury Minute, dated 1st May, 1906, declaring British Central Africa, the East Africa Protectorate, Northern Nigeria, the Somaliland Protectorate, Southern Nigeria, and Uganda to be unhealthy places for the purpose of the Superannuation Acts, 1859 and 1876.

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Treasury Minute, dated 1st May, 1906, granting a retired allowance to Mr. William Pearson, Staff Clerk, War Office.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 916

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.—University Court Ordinance, No. XIV. (Edinburgh No. 4) Institution of Degrees in Veterinary Medicine and Surgery and relative regulations. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No 70.) 916

IMPORTS INTO CANADA.—Return respecting. Laid before the House (pursuant to Order of the 30th of March last), and to be printed. (No. 71.) 917

STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee, that they have added the Earl Carrington to the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 917

Colonial Marriages Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to declare the law with respect to a marriage between a man and his deceased wife's sister domiciled in part of the British Possessions where such a marriage is legal. Was presented by the Lord Elgin (*E. Elgin and Kincardine*); read 1ª; to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Tuesday the 15th instant. (No. 75.) 917

Matrimonial Causes Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.].—EXTRADITION BILL [H.L.].—Orders of the Day for the Second Reading read, and discharged .. 917

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.—House in Committee (according to Order); Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee 917

Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill.—Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 917

TURKEY AND EGYPT.

The Marquess of Lansdowne 917

The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Fitzmaurice*) .. 917

Public Trustee Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 920

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 13, after the word 'Act' to insert the words 'nor any trust under a deed of arrangement for the benefit of creditors, nor the administration of any insolvent estate.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3 :—

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 29, after the word 'undertaking' to insert the words 'declaration in writing signed and sealed by him.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Lord Chancellor 921

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 38, after the word 'Act' to insert the words 'subject to such conditions as may be imposed by the rules.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4 :—

The Lord Chancellor .. ..

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 15, to leave out the word 'the' and to insert the words 'subject to rules under this Act the'; and after the word 'such' to insert the words 'and whether or not the number of trustees has been reduced below the original number.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor*).

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Faber 922

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 27, after the word 'trustee' to insert the words 'jointly with the other trustees or trustee.'"—(*Lord Faber.*)

The Lord Chancellor 922

Amendment by leave of the House withdrawn.

The Lord Chancellor 923

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 7, to leave out the word 'need' and insert the word 'shall.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Lord Chancellor 923

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Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 10, after the word 'otherwise' to insert as a new proviso the words 'and (b) where a request to concur is made in writing, signed by all the managing trustees, accompanied by a certificate from a duly qualified solicitor not being a trustee that the matter in which the custodian trustee is requested to concur is within the powers of the trust, the custodian trustee shall not be obliged to inquire into the legality of the matter, and shall be exonerated from all consequences of his concurrence if he acts in good faith.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Lord Ashbourne 924
The Lord Chancellor 924

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 28, after the word 'trustee,' to insert the words 'if he acts in good faith."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Faber 924
The Lord Chancellor 925

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, line 18, to leave out Sub-section (4)."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5 :—

The Lord Chancellor 926

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, line 26, after the word 'name' to insert the words 'or any other sufficient description.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Lord Chancellor 926

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 7, after the word 'given' to insert the words 'in the prescribed manner.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Lord Chancellor 926

Amendment moved—

> "In page 7, line 14, after the word 'made' to insert the words 'provided that a failure to give any such notice shall not invalidate any appointment made under this section.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Ellenborough 927

Amendment moved—

> "In page 6, line 14, after the word 'made' to insert as a new sub-section '(5) If any trustee or beneficiary in any existing or future trust in which a solicitor is acting or has acted in the double capacity of solicitor and trustee, shall apply to the Court to have the public trustee appointed as additional trustee, the Court shall make the appointment.'"—(*Lord Ellenborough.*)

On Question, new sub-section, as amended agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clause 7 :—

Lord Faber 928

Amendment moved—

> "In page 7, line 4, to leave out from the word 'discharge' to the end of the sub-section."—*Lord Faber.*)

The Lord Chancellor 929

Lord Faber 929

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 7 agreed to.

Clauses 8, 9, and 10 agreed to.

Clause 11 :—

The Lord Chancellor 930

Amendment moved—

> "In page 8, line 39, to leave out from the word 'provided' to the word 'solicitor' on page 9, line 5."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

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Clause 12 agreed to.

Clause 13 :—

Amendment moved—

> "In page 9, line 35, after the word 'estate' to insert as new sub-sections: (2) The Court may make the appointment of a person as judicial trustee to act as executor or administrator, with the will annexed, temporary, or subject to such conditions as to it may seem fit, and may sanction or direct the transfer of the estate to some other person for administration, and also the release of the person by whom such transfer is made. (3) Where application is made to the Court for the appointment of a judicial trustee, and it appears to the Court that the gross value of the trust property is less than five hundred pounds the Court shall appoint a judicial trustee, unless sufficient cause is shown to the contrary. (4) This section shall be read as one with the Judicial Trustees Act, 1896."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 13, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 14 :—

The Lord Chancellor 931

Amendment moved—

> "In page 9, line 36, to leave out the word 'unless' and insert the words 'subject to rules under this Act and unless.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 14, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 15 :—

Lord Ashbourne 931
The Lord Chancellor 932

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 15, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 16 :—

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 16, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining clause agreed to, and Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 72.)

YEOMANRY CAMP CANTEENS.

Lord Willoughby de Broke 932
The Marquess of Bath 934
The Duke of Marlborough 935
The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Portsmouth*) 937
The Marquess of Lansdowne 937
The Earl of Denbigh 939
Viscount Ridley 939
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 941

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 7TH MAY, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Preston, Chorley, and Norwich Tramways Bill [Lords]; Sheffield District Railway Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 943

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow 943

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 943

H. R. Baines and Company Bill [LORDS]; Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 943

London County Council (Money) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 944

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Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—" To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Birr, Dungarvan, Londonderry, Trim, and Tuam (Rural)," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Bryce; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 193.] 944

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.—" To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Dublin and Armagh," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Bryce; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 194.] .. 944

Shrewsbury Corporation Water Bill.—Ordered [April 10th], that the Shrewsbury Corporation Water Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 944

Heacham Water Bill—Ordered [March 21st], that the Heacham Water Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) .. 944

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, " An Act to incorporate the Penllwyn Railway Company; and for other purposes." [Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [Lords.] 944

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 944

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Altofts (Nos. 1 and 2); Elsecar; Haigh; Manvers Main; Newland Normanton; Wharncliffe Silkstone; and, Woodthorpe Collieries; to lie upon the Table .. 944

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—Petitions from Sarum St. Edmund, against; to lie upon the Table 945

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; From Alcester, Alderminster; Alfrick; Allesley; Alnmouth; Areley Kings; Aston Cantlow; Aston Magna; Atherstone; Aylesford (two); Barston; Barton on the Heath; Bedworth; Beltingham with Henshaw; Benwell; Berkswell; Bidford; Bilton; Binley; Birling (two); Birmingham; Bishampton; Bishop's Tachbrook; Blackheath; Blyth and Horton; Bolton; Brabourne; Brandsby cum Stearsby; Bredbury (two); Brinklow; Burmington; Butters Marston; Bywell; Cambois; Chadkirk (two); Charing; Charlecote; Chelsea; Chequerbent; Churchill; Church Hulme; Church Lawford with King's Newnham; Claines; Cotheridge; Cramlington; Cubbington; Deptford; Dodderhill; Dunchurch; Eckington; Ellesmere Port; Evesham; Eckenham; Finstall; Fiddington; Foleshill; Folkestone; Frimley (two); Gabalfa (two); Great Comberton; Halesowen; Halford; Hammersmith; Harley Wood (two); Harrietsham; Hatton; Heddon on the Wall; Herne; Herne Bay; Hindlip; Hulton; Husthwaite; Idlicote; Kenilworth; Kidderminster; Kilvey (two); Kineton; Kington and Dormston; Kirk Whelpington; Knightwick and Doddenham; Little Chart; Little Lever (two); Llandaff (two); Long Itchington; Lucker, Bradford, and Adderstone; Lulsley; Malvern (three); Malvern Link; Marton Mawgan (two); Meriden; Midsomer Norton (two); Meluron; Moor Monkton (two); Myddle;

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Newbold on Stour; Newbold Pacey and Asherne; Newburn; Netherton; Newcastle-on-Tyne (fifteen); Ninebanks; Normanton (two); North Gosforth; North Shields (two)); Oldberrow cum Norton Bagot and Spernall; Old Milverton and Guys Cliffe; Overbury; Pedmore; Preston Bagot; Rainbow Hill; Rashcliffe; Ratley; Redditch; Romsley; Rowington; Rusholme; St. Ives (two); St. Paul in the Blockhouse; Salwarpe; Shelsley Beauchamp; Shelsley Walsh; Shilton and Anstey; Sibertswold (two); Sissinghurst; Slaley; Snodland (two); Staunton; Stepney; Stoke Prior; Stourbridge; Suckley; Tardebigge; Teston (two); Tynemouth; Upper Arley; Upton Snodsbury; Wallsend (four); Walton Dale; Wappenbury with Eathorpe; Warmington; Warwick; Wealdstone; Welland; Wing (two); Witney; Wolford; Wollaston; Wolston; Wolvey; Woolston, Brandon, and Bretford; and, Worcester; to lie upon the Table 945

EDUCATION OF DEFECTIVE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Old Monkland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 946

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from the Royal Burghs of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 946

VACCINATION ACTS.—Petition from Sandwich, for repeal; to lie upon the Table .. 946

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Annual Report of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 946

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).—Copy presented, of Final Report of the Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Science (including the Royal School of Mines), Vol. II., Minutes of Evidence, Appendices II. to XIII., and Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 946

MILITARY PRISONS.—Copy presented, of Report on the Discipline and Management of Military Prisons in 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 946

NATAL.—Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the Native Disturbances in Natal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 946

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3573 to 3578 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 947

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).—Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 947

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (ORDINANCE).—Copy presented, of University Court Ordinance No. XIV. (Edinburgh, No. 4) (Institution of Degrees in Veterinary Medicine and Surgery and relative Regulations) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 158] 947

INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE.—Copy presented, of Correspondence relative to the establishment of an International Agricultural Institute, with the Report of the British Delegates, and the Minutes of Proceedings at the International Conference on Agriculture at Rome [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 947

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Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Departmental Committee).—Copy presented, of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to inquire into and report whether Preferential Treatment is given by the Railway Companies in Great Britain to Foreign and Colonial as compared with Home farm, dairy, and market garden produce, with Minutes of Evidence, Appendices, and Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 947

Superannuation Acts, 1858 and 1876.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated May 1st, 1906, declaring British Central Africa, the East Africa Protectorate, Northern Nigeria, the Somaliland Protectorate, Southern Nigeria, and Uganda to be unhealthy places within the meaning of The Superannuation Act, 1876 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 947

Superannuation Act, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated May 1st, 1906, granting to Mr. William Pearson, Staff Clerk, War Office, a Retired Allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 948

Licensing Statistics, 1905.—Copy presented, of Statistics as to the operation and administration of the Laws relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 948

Public Records.—Copy presented, of Sixty-seventh Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records [by Command], to lie upon the Table 948

Polling Districts (County of Durham).—Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of Durham, altering certain Polling Districts in the Chester-le-Street Parliamentary division of the county [by Act], to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House 948

Lunacy.—Copy of Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of Patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the Visitors of Lunatics between October 1st, 1905, and March 31st, 1906 [by Act] .. 948

East India (Financial Statement).—Address for "Return of the Indian Financial Statement for 1906–7, and of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General thereon."—(*Sir Henry Fowler*) 948

Irish Land Act, 1903 (Investment of Funds).—Copy ordered, "of Statement issued by a special Committee of the Dublin Stock Exchange with reference to the Investment of Funds under the control of the Supreme Court."—(*Sir William Bull*) 948

Ultimus Hæres (Scotland) (Account and List of Estates).—Return ordered, "of Abstract Account of the receipts and payments of the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer in Scotland, in the year ended December 31st, 1905, in the Administration of Estates and Treasure Trove on behalf of the Crown."

"And, of Alphabetical List of Estates which fell to the Crown as Ultimus Hæres in Scotland, administered by the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, in the same year."—(*Mr. McKenna*) 948

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FLOGGING IN IRISH CONVICT PRISONS.—Questions, Mr. Hazelton; Answers, Mr. Bryce 995

LORD DE VESA AND EVICTED TENANTS.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Bryce 996

MRS. ADAIR'S MOUNTMELLICK ESTATE.—Question, Mr. Delany; Answer, Mr. Bryce 996

MALLAGHDUFF EVICTED TENANT.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 997

IRISH COUNTY COURT CRIERS.—Question, Capt. Craig (Down, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 997

MORROGH BERNARD ESTATE, KERRY.—Question, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 998

IRISH LAND COMMISSION STAFF.—Question, Mr. Hazelton; Answer, Mr. Bryce 998

IRISH AGRICULTURE INQUIRY COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Hammond (Carlow) Answer, Mr. Bryce 999

CLARE SLOB LANDS.—Question, Mr. Halpin (Clare, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 999

INFANT MORTALITY.—Question, Mr. Godfrey Baring (Isle of Wight); Answer Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1000

FAIR WAGE CLAUSE IN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.—Questions, Mr. O'Grady (Leeds, E.); Answers, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1000

PLURAL VOTING BILL.—Questions, Mr. Lonsdale and Mr. Crooks; answers Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1001

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Crown Lands Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, without Amendment.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 159.]

Bill recommitted to a Committee of the whole House for Monday next .. 1001

Dean Forest Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, without Amendment.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 160.]

Bill re-committed to a Committee of the whole House for Monday next .. 1002

NEW BILLS.

Education of the Blind Bill.—"To provide for the Technical Education, Employment, and Maintenance of the Blind," presented by Mr. Steadman; supported by Mr. Summerbell, Mr. Crooks, and Mr. Clynes; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, June 19th, and to be printed. [Bill 195] .. 1002

Grocers' Licences (Scotland) Bill.—"To abolish Dealers or Grocers' Licences in Scotland," presented by Mr. Rainy; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Lamont, Mr. Findlay, and Mr. Cameron Corbett; to be read a second time upon Monday, May 28th, and to be printed. [Bill 196] 1002

Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Sir John Dickson-Poynder be a Member of the Select Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill."—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Mr. Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 1002
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. George Whiteley, Yorks., W.R., Pudsey*) 1002

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 335; Noes, 85. (Division List No. 69.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Major Dunne be one other member of the Select Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes Amendment Bill."—(*Mr. Whitely.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Crooks.*)

Mr. George Whitely 1010

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*) 1010

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham*).

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (*Sir Henry Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.*) 1028
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 1041
Mr. Perks (*Lincolnshire, Louth*) 1049
Sir Henry Craik (*Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities*) 1061

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

Mersey Railway Bill [Lords] (By Order.)

Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords] (By Order).—Second Reading deferred till Monday next at a quarter-past Eight of the clock .. 1065

Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question.

Sir Henry Craik 1065
Mr. Belloc (*Salford, S.*) 1071
Mr. J. Ramsey Macdonald (*Leicester*) 1075
Dr. Macnamara (*Camberwell, N.*) 1086
Lord Castlereagh (*Maidstone*) 1095

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Justices of the Peace (No. 2) Bill.—Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Mr. A. J. Balfour (*City of London*) 1100

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Balfour.*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn," put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at five minutes before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 8TH MAY, 1906.

The Lord Shute (*V. Barrington*) took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions.)

The same was ordered to lie on the Table 1101

Crellin's Patents Bill [H.L.].—Presented (pursuant to leave given yesterday), and read 1^{a}. 1101

Ritz Hotel Bill [H.L.].—Presented (pursuant to leave given yesterday), read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners 1101

Manchester Churches Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed th House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Orders made on the 22nd of March and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed .. 1101

Folkestone and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman o Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Orders made on the 29th of March and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed 1101

Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with amendments 1101

Millwall Dock Bill. Reported, without Amendment 1101

Hull and Barnsley Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.].—Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Havana United Railways and Regla Warehouses Bill [H.L.]; North Metropolitan Tramways Bill; Hull and Barnsley and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments 1101

Scottish Provident Institution Buildings Bill [H.L.].—Committed .. 1102

Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.].—Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over To-morrow 1210

Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Bill [H.L.] (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION).—Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next 1102

Carlisle Corporation Bill; Todmorden Corporation Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed 1102

Bacup Corporation Bill; Cardiff Gas Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1102

North East Lincolnshire Water Bill; Thornton Urban District Gas Bill; New Mills Urban District Council Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed 1102

Uxbridge Gas Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1102

Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^{a}, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1102

H. R. Baines & Company Bill [H.L.]; Vauclain's Patent Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to 1102

Great Yarmouth Waterworks and Lowestoft Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L.] and other Bills do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Great Yarmouth Waterworks and Lowestoft Water and Gas Bill [H.L.] and the Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to. All petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, also counsel for the Bills 1102

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.—Petitions in favour of maintenance of existing religious teaching in Church of England schools—of parents and guardians of children attending schools at Worsley; Manchester (2); Astley (2); West Houghton (2); St. Marks; Monton; Eccles; Swinton; Farington; Hoole; Darwen (2); Goosnagh; Blackpool; Blackburn (2). Of teachers in schools in Westhoughton (3); Eccles; Swinton; Astley; Glodwick; Swinton; Hoole; Blackpool; Lytham; Darwen; Goosnagh; Blackburn (2).—Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1103

POISONS AND PHARMACY BILL [H.L.].—Petitions for amendment of; of persons signing; in Loughboro'; Lincoln; Nottingham; Sheffield.—Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1103

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (SPECIAL REPORTS ON EDUCATIONAL SUBJECTS).—Volume 16. School Training for the Home Duties of Women. Part II. Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, and France 1103

ALIENS ACT, 1905.—Return of alien passengers brought to the United Kingdom from ports in Europe or within the Mediterranean Sea during the three months ending 31st March, 1906, together with the number of expulsion orders made during that period requiring aliens to leave the United Kingdom 1103

TRADE REPORTS—MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.—No. 649. Gold Mines of Formosa 1103

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ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3579. Persia (Arabistan).
No. 3580. Netherlands (Java).
No. 3581. Persia (Bushire).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Fable 1103

LUNACY.—Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the visitors of lunatics from the 1st October, 1905, to the 31st March, 1906. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1104

STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee, that they have added the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell, the Lord Granard (*E. Granard*), and the Lord Fitzmaurice to the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1104

Poisons and Pharmacy Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee with further Amendments. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House and by the Standing Committee to be received on Friday next, and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 76) 1104

Public Trustee Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee without further Amendments. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House to be received on Thursday next 1104

Patents, Designs and Trade Marks (Registration of Patent Agents) Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments; and to be printed as amended. (No. 77) 1104

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.—Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment; and to be read 3ª on Thursday next 1104

Solicitors Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next 1104

STANDING ORDERS RELATING TO PRIVATE BILLS.

The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Onslow*) 1104

Moved, that Standing Order No. 106, be amended by inserting after "trade" in line 4, "and His Majesty's Office of Works."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Standing Orders amended accordingly, and to be printed as amended. (No. 78.)

LOCAL TAXATION.

The Earl of Denbigh 1105
The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Earl Carrington*) 1116
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 1120
Lord Zouche of Haryngworth 1123
The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Fitzmaurice*) 1126

Viscount Ridley 1129
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1131
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 1134

Merchant Seamen's Allotments.

Lord Ellenborough 1136

Moved, That there be laid before the House a Return showing the number of seamen (exclusive of officers) who entered into foreign-going agreements at the principal ports in the United Kingdom during the years 1903–1905 and the number of allotments made by them in the following form :—

Name of Port.	Number of Seamen (exclusive of Officers) who entered into foreign-going Agreements.	Number of Seamen (exclusive of Officers) who made allotments.		Percentage of Seamen who made allotments.
		To relatives or other persons.	To a Bank.	
Total - -				

—(*Lord Ellenborough*).

On Question, Motion agreed to, and ordered accordingly 1137

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 8TH MAY, 1906.

The House met at a Quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills [Lords] (Standing Orders not Previously Inquired into Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1137

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Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 1138

Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords]. [Not amended], considered; to be read the third time 1138

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1138

Sea Fisheries Provisional Order Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries under the Sea Fisheries Act, 1868, relating to the Estuary of the Wash, in the county of Norfolk," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 197] .. 1138

London Outer Circle Railway Bill; Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Metropolitan Outer Circle Railway Bill, 1882, be referred to the Committee on the London Outer Circle Railway Bill.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1139

Pontefract Corporation Bill—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1139

Railway Bills (Group 4).—Sir George Doughty from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 1139

Message from the Lords.—That they have agreed to Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill, with Amendments.

They have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Wallasey Urban District Council to construct a tramway and promenades, and to make further provision in regard to their gas, water, electricity, ferries, and tramways undertakings, and the health, local government, and improvement of their district; and for other purposes." [Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [Lords.] 1139

Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1139

PETITIONS.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Alloa and Devon; Aldwarke (No. 1); Alva; Clackmannan; Fforest Isaf; Hartshead; Lanarkshire; Netherton; Tillicoultry; and, West Bromwich Collieries; to lie upon the Table 1139

Education (England and Wales) Bill (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of Law. From Abberton; Acton Beauchamp; Acton Green; Amblecote; Astley; Atherstone on Stour; Attleborough; Ansley; Badsey with Aldington; Beaudesert; Birdingbury; Birlingham; Birtsmorton; Bishop's Waltham (two); Blackheath; Bolton (three); Brecon; Bradley; Bredicot; Broadwas; Broome; Budbrooke; Burnham Thorpe (two); Bushley; Carbrooke; Chaceley; Chaddesley Corbett; Charlecote;

Charlton Pershore; Chawton (two); Chiddingstone (two); Chilvers Coton; Claines; Cleeve Prior; Clifton on Dunsmore; Cofton Hackett; Combroke; Cookley; Copdock; Cossall; Coventry (three); Cradley; Croftherne; Darlington (two); Defford cum Besford; Denton; Dersingham; Devynnock; Doverdale; Droitwich; Dudley; Earls Croome and Hill Croome; East Winch; Elmley Castle; Ethington; Farington (two); Farnborough; Farnsfield; Flyford Flavel; Foleshill; Fordham; Frankton; Gaydon with Chadshunt; Gow Honeybourne; Grandborough; Great Alne; Great and Little Hampton; Great Ringstead; Great Yarmouth; Harlington; Horstead; Hayes; Himbleton; Hinton Charterhouse; Holt; Honiley; Honingham and East Tuddenham; Horstead; Hunningham; Ickford (two); Kenilworth; Keresky; Kidderminster (two); Knights Enham cum Smannell; Leamington (three); Lighthorne; Little Comberton; Little Hulton; Littleton (two); Lound; Loxley; Marton; Masborough; Moreton Morrell; Moulton (two); Norton and Lenchwick; Norton juxta Kempsey; Old Swinford; Ombersley; Pershore (two); Pinvin; Priors Hardwick; Priors Marston; Ripple; Rodmell; Runham; St. Marylebone; St. Pancras (two); Sandon (two); Skillington (two); Snitterby; Snitterfield; Southam; Spetchley with Warndon; Stanford Rivers; Stanwell; Stibbington cum Sibson; Stockton; Stoke in Coventry; Stone; Stourbridge; Stretton on Fosse; Studley; Swavesey; Thorpe Abbotts; Toft Monks; Tredington; Upton on Severn; Upton Warren; Uxbridge; Ventnor (two); Walsgrave; Walton d'Eivile; Warwick (two); Wasperton; Waterbeach (two); West Bromwich; West Derby (two); West Drayton; Weston; Whichford; Wichenford; Wick; Wickhamford; Wickham Market; Wilden; Witley; Woburn Sands (two); Wolverley; Wolverton Wootton Wawen; Worcester (four); Wribbenhall; and, Wychbold; to lie upon the Table 1140

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.—Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1141

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.—Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1141

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.—Petition from Great Grimsby, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table 1141

WAGES BOARDS BILL.—Petition from Birmingham, against; to lie upon the Table 1141

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (SPECIAL REPORTS).—Copy presented, of Special Reports on Educational Subjects, Vol. 16, School Training for the Home Duties of Women. Part II. Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, and France [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1141

ALIENS ACT, 1905.—Copy presented, of Return of Alien Passengers brought to the United Kingdom from Ports in Europe or within the Mediterranean Sea during the three months ending March 31st, 1906, together with the number of Expulsion Orders made during that period requiring Aliens to leave the United Kingdom [by Command]; to lie upon the Table . 1141

ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered May 7th; *Mr. McKenna*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 161] 1141

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3579 to 3581 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1141

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 649 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1142

NEW WRIT.—New Writ for the Borough of Camberwell (Dulwich Division), in the room of Dr. Frederick Rutherfoord Harris (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*) 1142

PURCHASE INSPECTORS (IRELAND).—Return ordered, "showing (1) names of Inspectors on behalf of the Estates Commissioners; (2) date of original appointment; (3) date upon which appointment expires; (4) age on appointment; (5) residence at time of appointment; (6) locality in which practical experience of land was acquired; (7) where educated; (8) previous occupation; (9) acreage of land farmed; (10) whether held as owner or tenant; (11) what other experience in agriculture; and (12) what experience in valuing, mapping, and surveying."—(*Mr. Ginnell*) 1142

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

IRISH POSTAL ASSISTANTS—RELIGIOUS QUALIFICATION.—Question, Mr. Barrie (Londonderry, N.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1142

WINTON SUB-POST OFFICE, BOURNEMOUTH.—Question, Sir Robert Hobart (Hampshire, New Forest); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1142

POSTAL SORTING ALLOWANCES.—Question, Mr. J. P. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1143

ENGLISHMEN AND FOREIGNERS IN NATAL.—Question, Mr. Myer (Lambeth, N.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1143

PASSIVE RESISTERS.—Question, Mr. Pike Pease (Darlington); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1143

PROVISION FOR THE TEMPORARY DISCHARGE OF THE DUTIES OF DECEASED RECORDERS.—Question, Mr. Adkins (Lancashire, Middleton); Answer Mr. Gladstone 1144

THE ALBERT HALL DEMONSTRATION.—Question, Mr. Nield (Middlesex, Ealing); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1144

ST. HELENA AS A NAVAL PORT.—Question. Mr. Ridsdale (Brighton); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1445

NON-PROVIDED SCHOOLS—VALUE OF PROVISION OF SCHOOL HOUSE, ETC.—Question, Mr. Mond (Chester); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1145

EXPENDITURE ON ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.—Question, Mr. Mond; Answer, Mr. Birrell 1145

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Lehmann (Leicestershire, Market Harborough); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1145

CUSTOMS CHEMICAL ASSISTANT.—Question, Mr. Houston (Liverpool, West Toxteth); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1148

TESTING WORK AT THE NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY.—Questions, Mr. W. Pearce (Tower Hamlets); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1148

HOUSE OF COMMONS PROCEDURE.—Question, Mr. Blake (Longford, S.); Answer, Sir Henry Fowler 1149

PAY OF LABOURER EMPLOYED BY POST OFFICE AT BOLTON.—Question, Mr. Gill (Bolton); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1149

MARRIED WOMEN'S LIABILITY.—Question, Sir Samuel Scott (Marylebone, W.); Answer, Sir Lawson Walton 1149

CROWN AND QUIT RENTS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1150

SALE OF MR. G. C. P. MAHON'S ESTATE AT STROKESTOWN.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1150

APPLICATION OF THOMAS DOONA FOR REINSTATEMENT.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1151

SALE OF FAULKNER'S ESTATE, SPRINGFIELD, QUEEN'S COUNTY.—Question, Mr. Hammond (Carlow); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1152

SYSTEM OF ALLOTTING FIRST COMMISSIONS IN THE ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY AND ROYAL ENGINEERS.—Question, Mr. Brodie (Surrey, Reigate); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1152

PROMOTION TO WARRANT RANK IN ROYAL ARTILLERY.—Question, Captain Faber (Hampshire, Andover); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1153

HISTORY OF THE BOER WAR.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Haldane .. 1153

COST OF FIXING FOG SIGNAL ON ISLE OF RONA.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1154

FOREIGN CREW OF STEAMER "BLTYHVILLE."—Question, Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1154

TRAIN ARRANGEMENTS AT CASTLEBLAYNEY.—Question, Mr. MacKean (Monaghan, S.); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1154

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

GERMAN NAVAL EXPENDITURE.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) .. 1155

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, OSBORNE.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1156

ACCOUNTANT-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT (ADMIRALTY)—SECOND DIVISION CLERKS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1156

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H.M.S. "Actaeon"—Pollution of the Medway.—Question, Mr. Morton (Sutherland); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1157

Admiralty—Printing and Stationery Vote.—Question, Mr. Bellairs; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire) 1157

Military Manœuvres.—Question, Major Renton (Gainsborough); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 1158

Rights of Natives in South Africa.—Question, Mr. Myer (Lambeth, N.); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 1158

Maori Land Settlement Act.—Questions, Mr. Ashley (Blackpool); Answers, Mr. Churchill 1159

Bagdad Railway—Turkish Customs Duties.—Questions, Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs); Mr. Lynch (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon); Answers, The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) 1160

Ottoman Railway to Mecca.—Question, Mr. Lynch; Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1161

El Arish—Removal of Boundary Pillars.—Question, Mr. Ashley; Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1162

Prison Officials' Pay.—Question, Mr. Lea (St. Pancras, E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) .. 1162

Metropolitan Police.—Questions, Mr. Lea; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1162

Mount Pleasant Factory—Conditions of Employment.—Questions, Mr. O'Grady (Leeds, E.); Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 1163

Religious Tests for Teachers.—Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) Answer, The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 1163

The Yarmouth Election.—Questions, Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs); Answers, The Solicitor General (Sir W. Robson, South Shields) 1164

Exports of Horses to the Continent.—Question, Sir George Kekewich (Exeter); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, S.) 1165

Arinacrinacha and Camersterrach Public Schools.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 1165

Island of Lewis—Health Administration.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1166

Scottish Education Reports.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair .. 1166

Irish Evicted Tenants.—Questions, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.) and Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland, (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) 1166

Irish School Teachers.—Question, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1167

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IRISH DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE—VETERINARY BRANCH.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1168

IRISH TEACHERS SALARIES.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1168

KERRY EVICTED TENANTS.—Questions, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell and Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1169

SHIRLEY ESTATE.—Questions, Mr. McKean (Monaghan, S.) and Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1170

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK—IRISH BUSINESS.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1171

BANGOR (COUNTY DOWN) POST OFFICE.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.) and Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1172

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.—Questions, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) and Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) .. 1172

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL).—Ordered, that the Proceedings on the nomination of the Select Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill be not interrupted this evening under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House), and may be entered upon and proceeded with at any hour, though opposed.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) 1173

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures —Mr. Bright; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Robinson.

Report to lie upon the Table 1173

NEW BILLS.

Fatal Accidents and Sudden Deaths Inquiry (Scotland) Bill.—"To amend the Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Act, 1895, and to make further provision for Inquiry into Sudden and Suspicious Deaths in Scotland," presented by the Lord-Advocate; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 198] 1174

Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs) 1174
Sir William Anson (Oxford University) 1188
Mr. Alfred Hutton (Yorkshire, W.R., Morley) 1200
Mr. Blake (Longford, S.) 1205
Mr. Maclean (Bath) 1215
Mr. Evelyn Cecil (Aston Manor) 1216
Mr. Adkins (Lancashire, Middleton) 1225
Mr. Butcher (Cambridge University) 1229
Mr. Rendall (Gloucestershire, Thornbury) 1238

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund Bill [Lords]. (By Order).—Read a second time, and committed 1241

Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Postponed Proceeding on Amendment to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time," resumed.

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Rendall 1241
Sir Francis Powell (Wigan) 1243
Mr. Spicer (Hackney, Central) 1249
Sir John Kennaway (Devonshire, Honiton) 1254
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Mr. Lough, Islington, W.) 1259
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 1268

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned"—(*Mr. Bryce*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [7th May], "That Major Dunne be one other Member of the Select Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill."

Question again proposed.

Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 1275
Mr. Fenwick (Northumberland, Wansbeck) 1276
Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe) 1279
Mr. Brace (Glamorganshire, S.) 1281
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. George Whiteley, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) 1282
Mr. Crooks (Woolwich) 1283

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 320 ; Noes, 43. (Division List No. 70.)

Mr. Mackarness, Mr. Morrell, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Vivian, Mr. T. R. Bethell, Mr. Lane-Fox, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Abel Smith, and Mr. Ginnell nominated other members of the Select Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.
Ordered, That five be the quorum.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

Aliens Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

And it being after half-past Eleven of the clock on Tuesday Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put. 1288

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 9TH MAY, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Southampton Gas Bill.—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time 1289

Sutton, Southcoates and Drypool Gas Bill ; Waterford Corporation and Bridge Bill.—Reported with Amendments ; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1289

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—Petitions in favour : from Aspatria Pits ; Burslem ; East Leeds ; East Lothian ; Featherstone Main ; Hunslet Carr ; Llettys Lenkin ; Mid Lothian ; Rounds Green ; Strafford Main ; Wednesbury ; and Whitehaven Pits Collieries ; to lie upon the Table 1289

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Forfarshire, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 128

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law : from Allonby ; Armitage Bridge ; Benson (two) ; Bilston (two) ; Bradley (two) ; Brightstone ; Brownwood Park ; Castleside (two) ; Chaffcombe (two) ; Charlton Adam ; Chilcomb ; Chorley ; Crawley ; Crawthorne ; Earl's Court ; Finchley ; Flushing ; Framlingham and Saxted ; Hamsterley (two) ; Harvington ; Hawkehurst (two) ; Heversham ; Highgate ; Hinkley ; Holme Cultram ; Holton ; Horsington ; Hurst ; Ingatestone and Fryerning ; Kensington ; Kingsdon (two) ; Lawford (three) ; Llanvihangel (two) ; London (three) ; Moordown ; Muswell Hill (two) ; Nash Manor and Lisworney (two) ; North Cheriton (two) ; Northfield ; Norwich ; Outwood (two) ; Preston (two) ; Rusholme ; St. Michael at Bowes ; Salford ; South Shields (two) ; Spennymoor (two) ;

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Stillingfleet; Stoke upon Trent; Stoulton; Stretford (two); Stroud Green; Tewin (two); Tysoe; Waterhead; Willington; Winchester (five); and Winteringham; to lie upon the Table 1289

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—Petition from South Shields, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1290

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901, AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1290

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petition from South Shields, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1290

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Corstorphine in favour; to lie upon the Table 1290

PUBLIC AMBULANCE SERVICE (LONDON).—Petition from Kensington, for the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry; to lie upon the Table 1290

VACCINATION BILL.—Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute against; to lie upon the Table 1290

VACCINATION ACTS.—Petition from Bristol for repeal; to lie upon the Table .. 1290

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY.—Copy presented, of Interim Report of Anti-Typhoid Inoculation Committee (by Command), to lie upon the Table 1290

NAVY.—Copies presented, of Reports of Departmental Committees appointed to consider certain questions concerning the Extension of the New Scheme of Training for Officers of the Navy, etc. (by Command), to lie upon the Table 1291

EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT).—Return presented, relative thereto [*Sir Henry Fowler*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 162) .. 1291

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd April; *Mr. McKenna*] to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 163) 1291

WALNEY LIGHT DUTIES.—Return ordered, "of the Accounts of the Receipts and Expenditure of the Walney Light Duties as rendered to the Board of Trade, in accordance with Section 20 of the Furness Railway Act, 1894, for each of the last three years."—(*Major Seely.*) 1291

ILLITERATE VOTERS (GENERAL ELECTION, 1906).—Address for "Return showing the number of persons who voted as Illiterates at the General Election of 1906 in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. Crooks*) 1291

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

EXAMINATIONS FOR INDIAN FORESTRY SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Butcher (Cambridge University); Answer, Mr. Morley 1291

PAYMENT OF IRISH EDUCATION GRANTS.—Question, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1292

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POSTMEN'S PENSIONS.—Question, Mr. Arnold-Forster (Croydon); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1293

DELAY IN DELIVERY OF MR. JOHN NUNAN'S LETTERS.—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Cork County, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1293

IRISH LAND PURCHASE—STAMP DUTY.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1293

FRENCH BARLEY DUTY.—Question, Mr. Starkey (Nottinghamshire, Newark); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1294

TELEGRAPH GUARANTEES.—Question, Mr. Lloyd-Morgan (Carmarthenshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1294

INCOME TAX COMMITTEE—METHODS OF ASSESSMENT AND COLLECTION.—Question, Mr. Ridsdale (Brighton); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1294

TRANSFER OF THE SPARKBROOK FACTORY.—Question, Mr. Maddison (Burnley); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1294

INFANT MORTALITY—SUGGESTED APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Alden (Middlesex, Tottenham); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1295

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

DEVONPORT DOCKYARD—EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.—Questions, Mr. O'Grady (Leeds, E.) and Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee).. 1295

BOYS AND NAVAL CONSTRUCTION.—Question, Mr. J. Ward (Stoke-on-Trent); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1296

NAVAL CONSTRUCTION.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1296

THE NATIVE RISING IN SOUTH AFRICA.—BAMBAATA.—Questions, Mr. J. Ward and Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answers, The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 1297

TRANSVAAL SETTLER'S ORDINANCE.—Question, Sir J. Dickson Poynder (Wiltshire, Chippenham); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1298

TIBETAN INDENITY.—Question, Sir H. Cotton (Nottingham, E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. John Morley, Montrose Burghs) .. 1298

AKABAH RAILWAY.—Questions, Captain Faber (Hampshire, Andover); Answers, The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) 1299

VEHICULAR ACCIDENTS IN LONDON.—Questions, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) and Mr. Arthur Lee (Hampshire, Fareham); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 1299

JUDICIAL STATISTICS FOR 1905.—Question, Mr. Bottomley (Hackney, S.); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1300

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CASE OF MRS. EVA D'ANGELY.—Questions, Mr. Ashley (Blackpool) and Mr. Sloan (Belfast); Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1300

SETTLEMENT ESTATE DUTY.—Question, Mr. Radford (Islington, E.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire) .. 1301

YARMOUTH ELECTION PETITION.—Question, Mr. Straus (Tower Hamlets, Mile End); Answer, The Solicitor-General (Sir W. Robson, South Shields) .. 1302

QUEEN VICTORIA MEMORIAL.—Question, Sir W. J. Collins (St. Pancras, W.); Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale) 1302

CROFTERS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 1303

SANITATION IN THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1303

WESTERN HIGHLANDS EXCURSION STEAMERS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs) 1304

IRISH POOR RATE COLLECTORS.—Question, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool) 1304

MANAGEMENT OF IRISH FISHERIES.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) .. 1304

EXAMINERS IN THE IRISH LANGUAGE.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1305

THE ROYAL CANAL.—Questions, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answers, Mr. Bryce 1305

UNTENANTED LAND IN NORTH TIPPERARY.—Question, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1306

FITZGERALD—TUTHILL ESTATE —CASE OF THOMAS M'GRATH.—Question, Mr. Lundon; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1307

LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN KERRY.—Questions, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. Bryce 1307

TRINITY COLLEGE, KERRY ESTATES.—Questions, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell and Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answers, Mr. Bryce 1308

SECOND TERM RENTS IN COUNTY LIMERICK.—Questions, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answers, Mr. Bryce 1308

AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION SOCIETY.—Questions, Mr. Dillon; Answers, Mr. Bryce 1309

CORK COUNTY COUNCIL AND THE FISHING INDUSTRY.—Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1310

GALWAY RATE COLLECTORSHIP.—Questions, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway), Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.), Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr), Mr. Dillon, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory), and Mr. Hazleton (Galway, N.); Answers, Mr. Bryce 1311

IRISH RURAL POSTMEN—JEREMIAH CRONIN'S PAY.—Question, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) .. 1314

COLONIAL MARRIAGES BILL.—Question, Sir H. Cotton; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 1314

THE ESTIMATES.—Question, Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1314

Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [May 7th], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.*) 1317
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 1326
Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) 1336
Mr. Austin Taylor (*Liverpool, East Toxteth*) 1355
Mr. F. E. Smith (*Liverpool, Walton*) 1361
Mr. Yoxall (*Nottingham, W.*) 1373
Mr. William O'Brien (*Cork*) 1377

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. John Redmond*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

Mr. Vivian (*Birkenhead*) 1383
Mr. Fenwick (*Northumberland, Wansbeck*) 1391

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House is of opinion that the growth of expenditure on armaments is excessive and ought to be reduced, such expenditure lessens national and commercial credit, intensifies the unemployed problem, reduces the resources available for social reform, and presses with exceptional severity on the industrial classes, and it therefore calls upon the Government to take drastic steps to reduce the drain on national income, and to this end to press for the inclusion of the question of the reduction or armaments by international agreement in the agenda of the forthcoming Hague Conference.—(*Mr. Vivian.*)

Mr. Bellairs (*Lynn Regis*) 1393
Captain Hervey (*Bury St. Edmunds*) 1399

Amendment proposed—

"In line 6, to leave out all the words after the word 'income,' and add the words 'but this House relies on the Government to maintain British naval supremacy, and is of opinion that it is inadvisable for the Government to initiate a discussion concerning the armaments which Foreign Powers may deem necessary for the defence of their territories,' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Bellairs.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question"

Mr. Chas. Wilson (*Hull, W.*) 1401
Mr. Hugh Law (*Donegal, W.*) 1401
Mr. J. M. Robertson (*Northumberland, Tyneside*) 1402
Mr. A. J. Balfour (*City of London*) 1407
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick*) 1412

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House is of opinion that the growth of expenditure on armaments is excessive and ought to be reduced, such expenditure lessens national and commercial credit, intensifies the unemployed problem, reduces the resources available for social reform, and presses with exceptional severity on the industrial classes, and it therefore calls upon the Government to take drastic steps to reduce the drain on national income, and to this end to press for the inclusion of the question of the reduction of armaments by international agreement in the agenda of the forthcoming Hague Conference.

Market Gardeners' Compensation Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1416

Municipal Corporations Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow 1416

Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for Monday next 1416

MILITARY MANOEUVRES (ORDER IN COUNCIL).—Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, praying His Majesty, to make the Order in Council under The Military Manœuvres Act, 1897, a draft of which was presented to this House on the 21st day of February last.—(*Mr. Secretary Haldane*) 1416

To be presented by Privy Councillors and Members of His Majesty's Household.

Adjourned at three minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 10TH MAY, 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

His Royal Highness the PRINCE OF WALES singly took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Macclesfield and District Tramways Bill; Midland Railway Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1417

Bury Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1417

Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]—Returned from the Commons, agreed to 1417

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FEE FUND OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.—The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid on the Table the Annual Account of the Fee Fund of the House of Lords.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table, and to be referred to the Select Committee on the House of Lords Offices 1417

NAVY (NEW SCHEME OF TRAINING).—Reports of Departmental Committees appointed to consider certain questions concerning the extension of the new scheme of training for officers of the Navy, etc. 1417

ARMY.—Interim Report of Anti-typhoid Inoculation Committee 1417

TRADE REPORT (ANNUAL SERIES).—No. 3582. Turkey (Aleppo) 1417

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).—Return of evictions in Ireland, for the quarter ended March 31st, 1906.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 1417

INDIA. — (Home Accounts) — Home accounts of the Government of India. (Finance and Revenue Accounts)—Finance and Revenue accounts of the Government of India for the year 1904–1905. (Estimate)—Estimate of revenue and expenditure of the Government of India for the year 1905–1906, compared with the results of 1904–1905 1418

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Rule amending the time table of examinations for the year 1906.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1418

EDUCATION.—Petition in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools; of teachers in schools in Burnley; read, and ordered to lie on the Table .. 1418

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NEW BILL.

Street Betting Bill [H.L.].—A Bill for the suppression of betting in streets and other public places was presented by the Lord Davey ; read 1^{a} ; to be printed ; and to be read 2^{a} on Monday next. (No. 79) 1418

Police (Superannuation) Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Earl Beauchamp 1418

Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*Earl Beauchamp.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^{a} (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Public Health Acts (Building Bye-Laws) Bill—Order of the day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, " That the Bill be now read 3^{a}."—(*Lord Hylton.*)

On Question, Bill read 3^{a}.

Lord Hylton 1419

Amendment moved—

" In Clause 2, page 1, line 24, after the word ' building ' to insert the words ' or any part thereof.' "—(*Lord Hylton.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

" In Clause 2, page 2, line 7, to leave out ' Sub-section (3).' "—(*Lord Hylton.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

" In Clause 2, page 2, line 13, after the word ' building,' to insert the words ' and the curtilage of the building shall be deemed to be the space formed by the curtilages of the two dwelling-houses ' and to insert as a new sub-section, ' Where any stables, offices, or other outbuildings are appurtenant to, or used or intended to be used in connection with, any building or any part thereof, and are within the same curtilage as that building, that building shall not be excluded from the exemption under this section by reason of being within thirty feet of any of those outbuildings, nor shall any of those outbuildings be excluded from that exemption by reason of being within thirty feet of that building or of any of the other outbuildings.' "—(*Lord Hylton.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 3, page 2, line 41, after the word 'thereof' to insert the words 'or with another dwelling-house separated therefrom as mentioned in Sub-section 4 of this section; nor shall any such detached building as is lastly herein mentioned, be excluded from this exemption by reason only of its being within thirty feet of the dwelling-house in connection with which it is constructed to be used, or of another dwelling-house separated therefrom as aforesaid.'"—(*Lord Hylton.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

Public Trustee Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to Order).

The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 1420

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 5, line 16, to leave out Sub-section (3) and to insert the following new sub-section: '(3) Any banking or insurance company or other body corporate may by order of the Court made on the application of any person on whose application a new trustee may be appointed, or by or under the instrument creating the trust, be appointed to be custodian trustee of any trust, with power, if the Court so order or the instrument so direct, to charge and retain or pay out of the trust property the same fees as are chargeable by the public trustee as custodian trustee, or such smaller fees as the Court or instrument may direct; and where any such appointment is made, the provisions of this section shall, subject to any directions contained in the order or instrument, apply as they apply in the case where the public trustee is appointed to be custodian trustee, except that if the court or instrument so direct, the trust property and the right to transfer or call for a transfer of shares, stock, and securities shall vest in the custodian trustee jointly with the managing trustees.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Lord Faber 1421

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out Clause 12 and to insert the following new clause: 'The provisions of this Act with respect to the High Court shall, in their application to cases within the jurisdiction of a palatine court, include that court, and the public trustee shall provide an address within the county palatine where service upon him of any proceedings under this Act in such palatine court may be effected; the rules of court relating to the exercise of the jurisdiction of a palatine court under this Act shall be made by the authority having power to make general rules and orders of that court.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

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Consequential Amendment agreed to.

The Lord Chancellor 1422

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 15, page 12, line 13, to leave out the words 'by the public trustee.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 15, page 12, line 14, after the word 'office' to insert the following new paragraph: '(*e*) Excluding any trusts from the operation of this Act or any part thereof.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to. Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow; and to be printed as amended. (No. 81.)

Aliens Bill.—Brought from the Commons, and read 1ª, and to be printed. (No. 80.) 1422

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed 1422

Solicitors Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 1422

Cotton Cultivation.

The Duke of Marlborough 1422
The Earl of Scarborough 1432
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Earl of Elgin*) 1435

Australian Navigation Commission.

Lord Ellenborough 1443
The Earl of Elgin 1446

St. Helena Garrison.

Earl Bathurst 1447
The Earl of Elgin 1449

Great Britain and the Congo State.

The Marquess of Lansdowne 1450
The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Fitzmaurice*) 1450

House adjourned at half-past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 10TH MAY, 1906.

The House met at Quarter before Three of the Clock.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 1451

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH.)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill.

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time To-morrow 1451

London County Buildings Bill; Peterborough Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1451

STANDING ORDERS.—Standing Order 157a, relating to Private Business, was read and amended, in line 3, by inserting, after the word " Trade," the words " and His Majesty's Office of Works." And in line 6, by inserting, after the word " Trade," the words, " and His Majesty's Office of Works."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) 1451

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill.—" To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Carnarvon, Sheffield, the South West Gloucestershire United Districts, and Whitby," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Mr. John Burns; read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 199] 1452

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—" To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bude, Camberley, and District, East Barnet Valley, Exeter (Extension), Frome (Amendment), Higham Ferrers, Rushden, and Wellingborough (Rural District), Mid-Durham, Wealdstone, Wisbech (Amendment), and Yardley (Amendment)," presented by Mr. Kearley; supported by Mr. Lloyd-George; read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 200] .. 1452

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 1452

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow 1452

Ascot District Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill; Brixham Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1452

Sheffield Assay Office Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. Bill to be read the third time 1452

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [Lords]; Holyhead Water Bill [Lords]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1452

Middlesex County Council (Tramways) Bill.—Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1453

Bristol Corporation Bill; Metropolitan District Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed .. 1453

Railway Bills (Group 5).—Ordered, That Timothy J. O'Mahony do attend the Committee on Group 5 of Railway Bills upon Monday next, at Eleven of the clock 1453

Message from the Lords.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make provision for dealing with arrears of the dividend on the Preference and Second Preference Shares of the Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Company, Limited, and the accumulated balance to the debit of its revenue account; and for the increase and re-arrangement of its capital; and for other purposes." [Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [Lords] 1453

Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1453

PETITIONS.

Building Lands (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Forfar, against; to lie upon the Table 1453

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EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—Petition from Portsmouh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1454

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Forfar, against to lie upon the Table 1454

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (NO. 2) BILL.—Petition of the Incorporated Society of Law Agents in Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1454

LAND VALUES TAXATION, &c. (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Forfar, against; to lie upon the Table 1454

LAND VALUES TAXATION, &c. (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from the Royal Burghs of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1454

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Forfar, against; to lie upon the Table 1455

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) (NO. 2) BILL.—Petition from Forfar, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1455

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IRISH BOARD OF WORKS.—Question, Mr. Hazleton (Galway, N.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1492

TELEPHONE SERVICE IN COUNTY CORK.—Question, Mr. Edward Barry; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1492

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THE STIBBERT BEQUEST.—Questions, Mr. Claude Hay and Mr. Weir; Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 1493

PRIVATE PROPERTY AT SEA—IMMUNITY FROM CAPTURE.—Questions, Mr. Bright (Oldham); and Mr. Balfour (City of London); Answers, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1494

CHINESE CRIME IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Questions, Mr. Mackarness (Newbury), Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answers, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1494

SEA EROSION.—Question, Mr. H. H. Marks (Kent, Thanet); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1497

STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ETC.—Ordered, That leave be given to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc., to sit during the Sitting of the House on Monday next for the consideration of the Land Tenure Bill.—(*Sir Thomas Esmonde.*) 1501

Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill.—Ordered, That the Lords' Amendments be considered.—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

Lords' Amendments considered accordingly, and agreed to 1501

Local Authorities (England and Wales).—Return ordered, "showing for London, for England and Wales, excluding London, and for the two together, the approximate number of the local authorities which had financial transactions during the year 1904–5, and the number of such authorities whose accounts are subject to audit by district auditors; also showing, in the case of the last-mentioned authorities, whether the accounts are audited yearly or half-yearly."—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*) 1502

Selection (Standing Committees).—Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill—Sir Edward Strachey; and had appointed in substitution Mr. Munro Ferguson

Report to lie upon the Table 1502

Standing Committees (Chairman's Panel).—Mr. Stuart-Wortley reported from the Chairman's Panel that they had appointed Mr. Lawrence Hardy to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in the place of Sir Thomas Esmonde, at the conclusion of the proceedings on the Land Tenure Bill.

Report to lie upon the Table 1502

NEW BILLS.

Street Betting Bill.—"To provide for the suppression of Betting in Streets and other public places," presented by Mr. Yoxall; supported by Mr. Cave, Mr. Channing, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Osmond Williams, and Mr. Wood; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 18th, and to be printed. [Bill 201.] 1502

Telegraph (Construction) Bill.—"To amend the Telegraph Acts, 1863 to 1894, with respect to the construction and maintenance of telegraphic lines," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 202.] 1503

Marriage with Foreigners Bill.—"To enable the Law with respect to Marriages between British Subjects and Foreigners," presented by Mr. Herbert Samuel; supported by Secretary Sir Edward Grey; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 203,].. .. 1503

Street Traffic Regulation Bill.—"To amend public authorities to prohibit one person from having charge of two horses and two vehicles," presented by Mr. Shackleton; supported by Mr. Crooks, Mr. Gill, Mr. Snowdon, Mr. Charles Duncan, Mr. James Haslam, and Mr. Steadman; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 204-] .. 1503

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).—Ordered, That the proceedings on the Education (England and Wales) Bill have precedence this day of the Business of Supply.—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman*) 1503

Business of the House (Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Ordered, That the proceedings on the Second Reading of the Education (England and Wales) Bill, if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House.)—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman*) 1503

SUNDAY TRADING (JOINT COMMITTEE).—Ordered, That Sir Henry Kimber be discharged from the Joint Committee on Sunday Trading.

Ordered, That Sir George Doughty be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 1503

Education (England and Wales) Bill).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'" —(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 1504
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) 1516
Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 1526
Mr. Paul (*Northampton*) 1533
Lord R. Cecil (*Marylebone, E.*) 1536
Mr. Whitbread (*Huntingdonshire, Huntingdon*) 1544
Mr. Arthur Lee (*Hants, Fareham*) 1549
Mr. Snowdon (*Blackburn*) 1553
Sir Carne Rasch (*Essex, Chelmsford*) 1562

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down, by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means, under Standing Order No. 8, further proceeding was postponed without Question put.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [LORDS]. (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 1564

Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Postponed proceeding on Amendment to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time," resumed.

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Massie (*Wilts, Cricklade*) 1565
Mr. Burdett-Coutts (*Westminster*) 1570
Mr. Llewellyn Williams (*Carmarthen District*) 1575

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Mr. Middlemore (Birmingham, N.) 1582
Mr. Villiers (Brighton) 1584
Mr. A. J. Balfour (Ci y of London) 1589
The Secretary to the Board of Education (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) .. 1602

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 410 ; Noes, 204. (Division List No. 71.)

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Education of Defective Children (Scotland) Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment ; to be read a third time upon Monday next. 1621

Municipal Corporation Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time to-morrow 1621

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the clock on Thursday evening, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOLUME CLVI.

VOLUME CLV.

ERRATUM.

In Volume CLV., page 1116 (April 9th), insert—

Aliens Bill :—Bill read a second time and committed for to-morrow.

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

FIRST SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET
THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY IN THE SIXTH YEAR OF THE
REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1906.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 26th April, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz., Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz., Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; London Government Schemes (London and Penge, &c.) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Reports from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz., Poole Corporation Water Bill; Sutton District Water Bill.

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

POST OFFICE SITES BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of

Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 6th day of April, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz., Post Office Sites Bill.

Thornton Urban District Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Brighouse, the Guisborough, and the Hemel Hempstead Joint Hospital Districts," presented by Mr. Runciman; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 175.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Belper (Rural), Blaby (Rural), Ealing, Harrowgate, Ilfracombe, and Runcorn," presented by Mr. Runciman; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 176.]

London County Council (Money) Bill, "To regulate the expenditure of Money by the London County Council on capital account during the current financial period and the raising of Money to meet such expenditure, and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Private Bills (Group C)—Mr. Cawley reported from the Committee on Group C of Private Bills; that, for the convenience of Parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at Twelve of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Aberaman; Ackton Hall; Blaennant; Bowling; Buckhill Pit; Bullgill Pit; Clifton Pits; Dowlais; Fforchaman; Hightown; Kippax; Manvers Main; Newmarket; Oatlands Pit; Old Silkstone; Soothill Wood; Strafford Main; and, Watergate Pit Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING.)

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Abberton; Abbots Morton; Accrington (two); Addington (two); Alberbury; Aldborough (two); Aldermaston; Alford; Alvechurch; Andover; Areley Kings; Ashton under Lyne (two); Asterby with Goulceby (two); Astley (two); Aston Rowant; Athelhampton with Burlestone; Baguley (two); Baldock; Banham (two); Barbon (two); Barnard Castle (two); Battersea; Bedern; Beetham (two); Belchford; Bergh Apton; Berrow; Billingford; Bilsdale (two); Birmingham; Birstall (three); Birtsmorton; Bishampton; Bishop Auckland (two)! Blackley; Bolton (two); Bosheston (two); Boxford; Brackley; Bradley; Braysworth; Brereton cum Smethwick; Bricklehampton; Brightwalton (two); Brixworth (two); Broadwas; Broome; Broughton Astley (two); Brynamman (two); Buckingham; Bucklesham; Burgate; Burgh; Burnham (two); Burton Joyce; Bushley; Canonbury; Carmarthen (two); Chalfont St. Peter; Charlton; Charlton Horethorne; Chatham (six); Cilyewm (two); Checkendon (two); Chelford; Chorlton cum Hardy; Churcham and Bulley; Claines; Clapham; Clapton (three); Clayton le Moors; Cleckheaton (four); Cloughton (two); Cockerington; Cofton Hackett; Coldharbour (two); Combs; Cranworth; Cranworth with Letton and Southburgh; Crick; Cropthorne; Cuddington; Cuddington and Cheam Common; Culham; Culmstock; Cwmcarvan (two); Dafen (two); Darlington; Dartford; Datchet; Delabole (two); Denton and Haughton; Derby (two); Dingestow; Ditchingham; Dorking (three); Dover; Dudley; Ealing; Eardisley (two); East Challon (two); East Haddon; East Molesey; East Tisted; Ebberston and Allerton (two); Eckington; Elmore; Esher; Eskdale; Eweline; Exeter; Farforth cum Maidenwell; Faversham; Finstall; Flyford Flavel; Forncett St. Peter; Forthampton; Frampton on Severn (two); Frensham (two); Frostenden;

Gainford (two); Gargrave (two); Gilcrux (two); Gillingham (four); Glyntawe (two); Godalming; Gomersal (three); Goodramgate; Gorslas; Gorstas; Gorton (four); Great and Little Hampton; Great Cheverell; Great Comberton; Great Hockham; Great Horwood cum Singleborough; Great Witcombe (two); Greenhill; Grendon (two); Guarlford (two); Guildford (two); Guilsborough; Hales Owen; Hallow; Hardingstone; Harringworth; Harrow (four); Hartlebury; Haugh; Hazelmere (two); Hedgerly; Hedgerly Dean; Hemingby; Henbury (two); Henley-on-Thames; Himbleton; Hindlip; Holmwood; Holt; Horwich; Hurst Brook (two); Ipswich; Irnham (two); Islington (six); Kensington (three); Kidbrook; Kidderminster; Kingston-upon-Hull; Kingston and Dormston; Kintbury and Avington; Kirkby Stephen (two); Knighton-on-Teme; Leamington; Leigh (three); Letterston (two); Lincoln (two); Little Comberton; Llanfihangel Aberbythych (two); Llangeler; Llangennech; Llanhennoch (two); Llanllowell; Llannon (two); London; Long Marton (two); Loughfield; Ludborough; Ludgershall (two); Lusby; Marsworth; Meldon; Merrow (two); Mitchel Troy (two); Moorsby; Muston (two); Newbold-on-Stour; Newbridge on Wye with Llysdinam (two); Newnhame; Newton Blossomville; North Crawley (two); North Elmham; Northwould; Norton and Leuchwick; Nottingham (three); Nutfield; Nuthurst; Oakley; Oare; Odisham; Okewood (two); Old Swinford; Ombersley; Ormesby (two); Ospringe; Overbury; Padgate (two); Pateley Bridge; Paulton (two); Pentlow; Piddletown; Plymouth (two); Preston (four); Preston next Faversham; Rainbow Hill; Raithby by Spilsby; Ranworth cum Panxworth; Rattlesden (two); Redbourne; Redditch; Red Hill; Revesby; Rochdale; Roscoe; Rougham; Rous Leuch; Roxeth; St. Albans; Salwarpe; Sansthorpe; Scamblesby cum Cawkwree; Scremby; Scrivelsby cum Dalderby; Shalford; Shamley Green (two); Sheldwhich Leys; Shelsley Beauchamp (two); Shenstone (two); Shepley (two); Shire Moor (two); Skirbeck Quarter; Smetterton; Southampton (six); South Stoneham (two); Sparsholt; Spilsby and Hundleby; Stafford (three); Stamford; Staunton; Stepney; Stockcross; Stoke Newington (six); Stoke Prior; Stoke Trister; Stone; Stonham Aspal; Stoulton; Stourbridge; Stradbroke; Stretton (two); Swyncombe; Thorpe Hamlet; Tumby; Tunstall (two); Twyning; Tyldesley (two); Ulney; Upton-on-Severn; Upton St. Leonard's; Upper Arley, Upper Sapey (two); Walsgrave; Wantage; Warborough; Warmfield; Welford; Welford cum Wickham; Werrington; West Ashby; West Gorton; West Hartlepool (three); Weston Longueville; Whaddon; Whitley; Whitson Goldcliff (two); Wichenford; Wick; Wilden; Willington Haimer (two); Willoughby; Witley; Wolverley; Wooburn; Woodford; Worcester (six); Wribbenhall; Yardley Hastings; and York; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL.

Petition of the Personal Rights Association, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition of the Scottish Licensed Trade Defence Association, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition of the Scottish British Women's Association, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Perth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN ACT, 1905.

Petition from Shoreditch, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petitions for repeal; From Manchester; Southport: and, Waterford; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (EVICTION NOTICES.)

Copy presented, of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st March 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT ACT, 1903.

Copy presented, of Report of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland of all his Proceedings under the Act, for the year ended 31st March 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 12th March; *Mr. O'Shee*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 135.]

MAGISTRATES (IRELAND.)

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 22nd March; *Mr. Flynn*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 136.]

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) (PERSONS COMMITTED.)

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 30th March; *Mr. Mooney*; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 137.]

PRISONS (RELIGIOUS CREED OF PRISONERS.)

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 26th March; *Mr. Hay Morgan*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. No. 138.]

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND.)

Copy presented, of Report and Papers relating to the Training of Teachers for the past years 1904–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION (SCOTLAND.)

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th July 1905; *The Lord Advocate*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 139.]

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS.)

Copy presented, of Postal Agreement for an exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Switzerland, dated the 8th October 1905–17th October 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS.)

Copy presented, of Postal Agreement for an exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Hungary, dated 28th October, 1905–16th November 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3564 to 3566 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

HARBOUR, ETC., BILLS (KINGSTON-UPON-HULL CORPORATION BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Report of the Board of Trade on the Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Posting of Typewritten Circulars.

MR. RUFUS ISAACS (Reading): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state why typewritten notices of meetings, circulars, etc., do not come under the same postal regulation, as regards rate and manner of posting, as similar notices when handwritten; and whether he can see his way to modify the regulation so as to bring the typewritten into the same class as the handwritten notices and circulars.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) For postal purposes no difference is made between typewritten and handwritten notices, etc.

Exemption of the Members of the Society of Friends in Natal from Military Service.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether members of the Society of Friends resident in Natal are exempt from military service, or whether they are liable to be called upon to serve under the last Militia Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) Members of the Society of Friends resident in Natal are not exempt from military service under the local Militia Act of 1903. Resolutions for their exemption were rejected by the Legislative Assembly.

Royal Engineers and Ordnance Survey.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can state if the 16th Company, Royal Engineers, are still on the survey, or whether they are only being drafted into other companies who are on the survey; whether survey companies of the Royal Engineers, when sent for their annual training to the Curragh Camp, receive full working pay whilst doing military duty there; and, if so, whether their pay and travelling allowances are taken from the survey grant which is voted for direct survey work on the field.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The 16th Company, Royal Engineers, is no longer attached to the Ordnance Survey. Its removal leaves a slight excess (about twenty-four) in the establishment of non-commissioned officers and men for the three remaining companies, and these supernumeraries will be absorbed as vacancies occur. The Royal Engineers receive full working pay from the Ordnance Survey Vote while doing their annual training. Their travelling expenses are defrayed partly from Army Votes and partly from the Vote for the Ordnance Survey.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that ex-Royal Engineers non-commissioned officers have been made permanent in the Ordnance Survey after being only six months out of the corps and enjoying a military pension, and that instances have occurred where civilians after thirty-three years continuous service have been recommended for discharge without gratuity or pension; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) In some few instances ex-Royal Engineers have received permanent appointment, after a few months service as civilians, subsequent to their discharge from the corps with a pension. In almost all cases they continued to fill the same posts as they occupied while serving in the Royal Engineers. No civilians have been discharged after thirty-three years continuous service without gratuity or pension except on the ground of serious misconduct.

Printing of Ordnance Survey Maps.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he can state under what circumstances machinery for printing and the printers working the machinery have been removed from the Ordnance Survey, Dublin, to Southampton for the purpose of printing Irish maps at Southampton; what is the cost of conveyance of the maps from Southampton to Dublin; whether he will inquire if it would not tend towards economy to have the work done in Ireland; whether he can state under what circumstances is the revision of the county Dublin being done by the Derby field section and being sent to Southampton for completion; whether this work could be done in Ireland by the Irish staff; and what was the cost of conveyance of the Derby Division field section to Dublin.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) On the completion of the one-inch map of Ireland there was not sufficient colour work left fully to employ the colour-printing press at Dublin, and such removals as were made were carried out with a view to economy in colour-printing, but neither printers nor printing machines were removed to Southampton for the express purpose of printing Irish maps there. The cost of the conveyance of maps, etc., from Southampton to Dublin amounts approximately to £50 a year. It would cost about the same amount to send paper to Dublin for printing there, and no economy could be effected by the arrangement suggested. The Derby Division is not engaged on the Survey of Ireland, but in view of the breaking up of that division by the end of this year endeavour has been made, as far as possible, to find work for some of the surveyors attached to that division after the completion of their work in England. The section transferred to county Dublin, consisting of four men, has become part of the Dublin Division. The cost of conveying the section to county Dublin was about £3.

Locomotives on Highways in Scotland.

Major McMICKING (Kirkcudbrightshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been drawn to the number of fatal accidents that have occurred within the last few years to men in charge of steam threshing mills and traction engines on highways in Scotland; whether he is aware that these accidents are frequently due to the provisions of the Locomotives (Scotland) Acts, 1865 and 1878, requiring one of the men to accompany the locomotive on foot, and to the men's inability to comply with this regulation when travelling long distances, whereby they are tempted to ride on the draw bars of the engine; and whether, in view of the loss of life that has taken place, and of the fact that motors driven at high speed are exempt from the above regulation, he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation to amend the said Acts in the direction of allowing the men to sit at the rear of the last wagon.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I shall be glad to consider any information regarding these accidents. The Locomotives Act of 1898, following the Report of the Traction Engines Select Committee of 1896, allowed the man accompanying the locomotive to do so in such a manner as to be able to give assistance to any person with horses or carriages, and thus freed him from the requirements to walk on foot. This provision, which at present only applies to England and Wales, might properly, when a suitable opportunity occurs, be extended to Scotland, and I shall keep the matter in view.

Leases of Irish Foreshores.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state the number of leases or lettings held, and by whom, of foreshores round the Irish coasts, and the conditions under which these are granted, together with the particulars of the cases where the right of ownership is exercised with the knowledge of the Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) It has been the practice of the Board of Trade to present to Parliament once in every five years a statement of the particulars of all cases in which the rights and interests of the Crown in the shores and bed of the sea and tidal rivers have been sold, leased, or otherwise dealt with by the Board of Trade. The last Return contained the cases for the five years terminating December 31st, 1901. I can supply the hon. Member with copies of these Returns, and also with similar statements as to dealings by the Board of Trade for the years 1902, 1903, and 1904. I am advised that it would not be expedient to give the information asked for in the latter part of the Question.

Training Institutions for Midwives.

MR. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, having regard to the refusal of the Central Midwives Board to recognise certain of the large Poor Law infirmaries as training institutions, he will have a Return prepared showing the names of the institutions recognised as training institutions by the Central Midwives Board, together with the number of midwifery cases in each.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The Lord President of the Council is the Minister concerned with the Central Midwives Board, and the matter referred to in the Question is therefore for him. I understand, however, that there would be no objection on his part to give the information desired.

Decorations of Lord Beaconfield's Statue on Primrose Day.

DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will explain by whose authority and why there was forbidden to be placed on the statue of the late Lord Beaconsfield, on the anniversary of his death, a shield, composed of primroses and forget-me-nots, bearing a quotation from one of his utterances.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) I gave instructions, in conformity with previous practice, that any wreath bearing an inscription which might cause pain to Lord Beaconfield's relations or political admirers should be removed, in order that the anniversary of his death and the statue erected to his memory should not be made the occasion or the platform for current political controversy.

Tobacco Imports into India.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can state the amount of foreign tobacco imported into India during 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) During the year ending December 31st, 1905, the amount of tobacco imported into India was 5,397,032 pounds. In this are included cigars and cigarettes and every other form of tobacco.

Irish Land Purchase.

MR. GLENDINNING (Antrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number of holdings bought out under the several Land Purchase Acts in the Coleraine Poor Law Union; the number bought out in the Ballymoney Poor Law Union, under the same Acts; and the aggregate amount of such purchases in these two unions.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Land Commission records of the sale of holdings under the Land Purchase Acts, which include all purchase legislation from The Landlord and Tenant Act, 1870, down to the Act of 1903, have always been kept by counties and not by poor law unions, and Returns of the number of holdings sold in each county are annually published. I understand that to prepare such a Return as is suggested would withdraw men from their ordinary duties and would take a long time, and that the preparation of such a Return would involve a great amount of work, not only in the Land Commission, but also in other departments. In the circumstances I fear that the importance of the suggested Return is hardly sufficient to justify the amount of extra labour that would be involved in its preparation.

MR. GLENDINNING: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the case of probate of a farm which had been bought out from the landlord, the annuity to the Government could be deducted from the probate value when under £500; and, if not, what is the scale which the Inland Revenue has adopted in such cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) In the case of land purchased under the Land Purchase Acts, the redemption value of the annuity payable to the Land Commission constitutes a legitimate deduction from the gross value of the land for the purpose of ascertaining the value on which estate duty is payable. If the nett value so ascertained should fall below £500, estate duty would be chargeable at the rate of 1 per cent., in the event of the purchase having been made by the deceased himself, but at the fixed rate of 50s. (or 30s. if the value were under £300) in the event of the purchase having been made by a predecessor in title to the deceased.

Irish Intermediate Exhibitions.

MR. GLENDINNING: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland on what basis are intermediate exhibitions awarded; and will he explain why in June, 1905, in the middle grade girls, the number of £25 exhibitions awarded to modern literature was twelve, and science one, seeing that in both subjects the number of passes was the same, and honour marks in science only eight lower than in modern literature.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of Intermediate Education inform me that the basis on which exhibitions were awarded in 1905 is contained in Rules 41, 42 and 43. As regards the second part of the Question, the Commissioners inform me that they are unable to give a reply, as the meaning of the Question is not clear to them, and perhaps my hon. friend will take an opportunity of putting the Question down in a more precise form.

Charge for Armoy Water Supply.

MR. GLENDINNING: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why the ratepayers of the Ballycastle dispensary district, in addition to paying a rate of 10d. in the pound for water and sewerage charges, are to be further charged by the Local Government Board with cost of water supply to be taken into the town of Armoy, after a promise from the district council of exemption from paying any further rates for water or any sewerage scheme that might in the future take place over the Ballycastle union.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I understand that the facts are substantially as stated in the Question, save that it is the ratepayers of the town of Ballycastle and not the ratepayers of the Ballycastle dispensary district generally who should be referred to. The town of Ballycastle, consisting of the townland of Townparks, at present bears the cost of its own water and sewerage works; but, in consequence of a recent judgment of the Court of Appeal, the Local Government Board had no power to exempt it when declaring the expenses of the Armoy water supply to be a dispensary district charge. The remedy for the grievance lies, however, in the hands of the local authority, as, if they consent to the cost of the sanitary works in the town of Ballycastle being also made a dispensary district charge, the Local Government Board will readily make an order accordingly. The Board have suggested the adoption of this course in a letter which they have addressed to the rural district council.

The March of the 1st Buffs from Lydd to Dover.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether an inquiry has been held into the circumstances under which the marches of the 1st Battalion of the Buffs, on Tuesday 10th, and Wednesday 11th instant, from Lydd to Dover, resulted in the death of two men, and on the falling out and conveyance to hospital of many others, owing to the extreme heat; and, if so, whether blame attaches to the arrangements made as to the rations or kit of the men, or to neglect of proper consideration on the part of the officers and surgeons of the regiment or staff.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command, has not yet received a full Report on the case alluded to. I am not, therefore, in a position to give the hon. Member any information at present, but I will take care that the matter is carefully inquired into.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Douglas Committee.

*MR. T. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.) I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he is able to state when the Report of the Committee presided over by Admiral Sir A. Douglas will be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg also to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty when the Reports and evidence of the Douglas Committee will be laid upon the Table; whether an opportunity for discussing it will be afforded; and, if so, when.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The Papers are in a forward state, but it is not possible at present to say when they will be laid upon the Table. An opportunity for discussing the Report will be given on Navy Vote 12.

Greenwich Observatory.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the London County Council have recently erected a power station on the Meridian, close to Greenwich Observatory; that the vibration caused by the engines and the smoke interfere with the use of instruments; and whether it will be possible in the future to rely on observations taken there for the purpose of the Nautical Almanack.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The matter is receiving consideration.

Naval Construction.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can inform the House as to the amount of the total liability arising out of new ships of all classes now building or contracted for; and what is the number of ships of each class now building or placed out to contract.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The estimated cost of the new ships of all classes now under construction in the Royal and private Dockyards is £26,013,419. Of this total £12,126,220, has already been expended. The ships are:– six battleships, ten armoured cruisers, eighteen torpedo boat destroyers, eighteen submarines, one repair ship, one royal yacht, three tugs and other small craft.

MR. ALDEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the House could be fully informed, before the financial statement, what are the total sums to which it is committed in the present and future years by the policy of the Admiralty in regard to ships and works on land respectively.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The estimated expenditure in respect of ships now under construction in the present financial year is £9,516,508, and in subsequent years £4,370,691. As regards works on land, the estimated expenditure under Vote 10, deducting the annuity in repayment of the works loan and expenditure on repairs and maintenance, is £690,191. The estimated expenditure under the works loan during the current year is £3,200,000. Commitments in respect of future years are approximately £847,000 for the completion of works begun under Vote 10, and £4,453,000 for the completion of loan works.

H.M.S. "Dreadnought."

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can now state what is to be the heavy gun armament of H.M.S. "Dreadnought," and what number of heavy guns are to be kept in reserve for her to replace disabled ones.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: A statement as to the armament and other details of the "Dreadnought" will be made when Vote 8 is discussed. It is not considered desirable in the public interest to give the information asked for in the latter part of the Question.

MR. BELLAIRS: Is it not the case that by quoting the price of the guns in an Answer on the 2nd April,† the right hon. Gentleman has already given the information so far as foreigners are concerned?

[No Answer was returned.]

The Explosives Committee.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the names of the members amongst whom fees amounting to £1,450 are paid under Item B, Vote 9, of the Army Estimates, and what other duties are performed and emoluments received by these gentlemen.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): This money is taken for the civilian members of the Explosives Committee, who are not in Government service. Last year they were Lord Rayleigh, President Sir A. Noble, and Sir W. Crookes. No other duties were performed or emoluments received by them so far as the War Office was concerned. Lord Rayleigh resigned his position as President at the commencement of the present financial year.

Method of Paying Army Pensions.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the opinion expressed by several boards of guardians in favour of the weekly payment of Army pensions; and whether he can hold out any hope that such a measure will be adopted.

MR. HALDANE: My attention has been called to these expressions of opinion. The whole question is now receiving careful consideration.

Ordnance Committee.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the names of the civil members amongst whom fees amounting to £1,000 are paid under Item A, Vote 9, of the Army Estimates; and what other duties are performed and emoluments received by these gentlemen.

MR. HALDALE: This money is taken for the civilian members of the Ordnance Committee who are not in Government service. The present members are Sir Benjamin Baker and Mr. H. R. A. Mallock. No other duties are performed or emoluments received by these members as far as the War Office is concerned.

Cost of the New Short Rifle.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what percentage of the new short rifles are being made at Enfield and Birmingham, respectively; will he quote the contract price for the manufacture of the rifle at Birmingham and the cost of manufacture at Enfield, inclusive of cost of material, workmanship, general charges, and allowances for inspection; and will he state what percentage for depreciation of tools is allowed in this estimate of cost.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 161.

MR. HALDANE: It is assumed that a comparison is required between the rifles made at Enfield and those made by the trade including the London Small Arms Company and Sparkbrook. This year short rifles will be made in the proportion of about two at Enfield to three in the Trade Factories. The latest ascertained price for the Ordnance Factories is £3 18s. 5d. per rifle in 1904–05, and the estimated price for 1905–06 is £3 15s. 8d. No charge for inspection is included in these prices, but 10 per cent. of the value of machinery is included to cover depreciation. Tools are charged against the cost as usual. It is not considered desirable to state the present price of the trade rifles, but it is not anticipated that there will be any material difference this year between Ordnance Factory and trade prices.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the placing of this order for new rifles at the Sparkbrook Factory will enable the workmen who have lately been discharged from the Government factories to be kept on by the new Company.

MR. HALDANE: We have given the orders on as handsome a scale as we could for that very purpose. If the hon. Member desires further information perhaps he will put down another Question.

Local Option in British Colonies.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will grant a Return of the provisions in Colonial laws under which powers of local option in regard to the issue or renewal of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors are conferred upon the inhabitants of British Colonies, showing the licensing authority, the licensing area, the different options submitted to a popular vote, with the proportion of voters required to carry each option, the persons entitled to vote, and the periods at which elections are held.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I shall be glad to grant the Return desired by my hon. friend on the understanding that it relates only to Colonies possessing responsible government.

General Botha and Chinese Coolie Crimes.

MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a speech made on March 28th by General Botha at Germiston, in which he is reported to have said that assaults, murders, and robberies by the Chinese coolies on the people of the Transvaal were the order of the day, and that these outrages increased every day; whether he has yet received from Lord Selborne the promised Return of crimes committed by the Chinese; and what steps the Transvaal Government have taken to put a stop to the suffering thus inflicted upon British citizens in that Colony.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have seen a report of a speech by General Botha at Germiston on March 28th, but do not find in it the expression quoted by the hon. Member. The return which covers the period June 1st, 1905, to February 28th, 1906, has now been received and will be published without delay. It shows that the largest number of outrages occurred in July and August last. Lord Selborne in a despatch dated March 5th has stated that "the police measures which have been taken to protect the inhabitants of the Witwatersrand from the lawless acts of the small number of criminals who are to be found among the Chinese coolies have been undoubtedly successful."

Transvaal Finance.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government of the Transvaal has been repaid the loan advanced to Mr. Van Rensburg when Member of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, in regard to which legal proceedings were lately instituted.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have no recent information on this subject, but will make inquiry.

Colonial Conference.

Mr. J. M. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the propriety of publishing a full Report of the Proceedings of the Conference between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Prime Ministers of Self-governing Colonies, 1902.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The Conference itself decided that a full Report should not be published as the hon. Member will see from page 1 of Cd. 1299, and it is not now possible to alter that decision.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Did not one of the Colonies object to the publication of the full Report?

Mr. CHURCHILL: Yes.

Chinese Coolies in South Africa.

*Mr. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what measures have actually been taken and put into force by the Transvaal authorities to give effect to the intention of the Government to give the Chinese coolies working in the mines, who had a genuine and honest wish to go home, the power to do so, and to do away with the unusual and illegal practice of allowing trials of the Chinese to be conducted in the mines without any recourse to the ordinary Courts.

Mr. CHURCHILL: In reply to the first part of the Question, it is a matter of regret to the Secretary of State that he should still be unable to make a final statement on this matter. Affairs of considerable importance and urgency have required Lord Selborne's presence in Bechuanaland, and his personal influence and authority are most desirable in the full and satisfactory settlement of a question so complicated and difficult. Every effort is being made by the Secretary of State to fulfil the pledges given to Parliament with the utmost expedition; and I must ask my hon. friend and the House for an extension of their patience and confidence. In reply to the second part of the Question, the extent of the Witwatersrand reef and the scattered distribution of mining estates along it would oppose practical difficulties of an insuperable character to any system of trying Chinese coolies accused of minor offences in the ordinary Courts of the Colony. Serious offences are in all cases so tried. The Inspectors' Courts will, however, be outside the mining compounds. Buildings have been in some cases already prepared and will be in all cases prepared for that special purpose. Free access has been secured to all persons wishing to attend any session of these Courts, and notices to that effect have been posted outside each court. It is clearly in the interests of the coolies that they should be tried by the Mining Inspectors who are Government officers of good personal qualifications, and who are familiar with Chinese customs and with the Chinese language.

Sir GILBERT PARKER asked whether it was not the case that minor offences had been tried in buildings outside the mine premises for quite eight or nine months past.

Mr. CHURCHILL said he believed that that was so in a considerable proportion of mining estates on the Witwatersrand reef. It was proposed to insist on that in respect of all the other mining estates.

*Mr. MACKARNESS asked whether the coolies were tried in this manner with the sanction of the Chinese Government.

Mr. CHURCHILL: If my hon. friend desires to suggest by that Question that the procedure is illegal and a violation of the Convention, I believe there is no foundation for such a suggestion. I believe the procedure is entirely legal and entirely in accordance with the Convention.

An HON. MEMBER: Will the hon. Gentleman say what is the distinction that separates a minor from a major offence?

Mr. CHURCHILL: The powers of the mining inspectors, who have magisterial functions delegated to them, are limited to the imposition of a fine up to the maximum of £75—a very heavy fine, no doubt—and of sentences not exceeding six months imprisonment. All offences which would require more severe penalties would, naturally, be excluded from the purview of these magistrates, but the instructions which the mining inspectors have received lead them still further to transfer all sentences of a serious character, even though they might be dealt with within these limits, to the ordinary regular Courts.

MR. VERNEY (Buckinghamshire, N.) asked whether the hon. Gentleman could confidently assure the House that these inspectors were thoroughly acquainted with the Chinese language.

MR. CHURCHILL: I think that is the principal qualification for their appointment.

*MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) asked the hon. Gentleman whether it was possible to name a date when these instructions would be published. Nearly two months had elapsed since this statement and pledge was made in the House, and evidently nothing had been done.

MR. CHURCHILL said the hon. Gentleman was not right in saying that nothing had been done. He recognised that the hon. Gentleman, or any other hon. Gentleman, was entitled to press the Government for a definite decision on the matter, and it was his earnest hope to be able to announce that decision without unnecessary or undue delay.

Tibetan Indemnity.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is in a position to make any further statement regarding the payment of the first instalment of the Tibetan indemnity, amounting to Rs.100,000, which was due on January 1st last.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN ELLIS, Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): Communications between the Government of India and the Tibetan representative are still proceeding. I hope to be able to make a statement shortly.

SIR H. COTTON: Is it the fact that the Tibetan representative has returned to his own country?

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: I can add nothing to the Answer I have given, but if my hon. friend desires he can communicate with me privately.

Great Britain, China, and Tibet.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to make any statement regarding the negotiations between His Majesty's Government and the Chinese Government for the adhesion of China to the Tibetan Convention of September 7th, 1904.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The negotiations with the Chinese Government are still proceeding at Peking, and I hope may soon be brought to a conclusion; when that is so, the result will be made known. Meanwhile, in view of statements which have appeared recently, I may say that the negotiations do not contemplate an alteration of the Tibet Convention.

Increase of the Egyptian Garrison.

MR. GOOCH (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what increase is contemplated in the Egyptian garrison; whether such increase is due to the frontier problem; and, if so, whether it is intended to be temporary or permanent.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The strength of the Egyptian garrison was reduced in 1904. Lord Cromer considers now that, in view of the unrest existing in Egypt, which is in some measure due to the action of the Porte in connection with the frontier, it is desirable to reinforce the garrison. This will be done, but the actual details are still under consideration. It is impossible to say for how long this increase will be necessary. This must obviously depend upon circumstances.

Macedonia.

*MR. LYNCH (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can lay upon the Table a copy of the *règlement* as at present administered in Macedonia by the representatives of the six Powers and Turkey.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Yes, Sir, a copy of the *règlement* will be laid.

Turkey and Egypt.

*MR. LYNCH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can lay upon the Table any Papers explanatory of the differences that have recently arisen on frontier questions between the Governments of Turkey and Egypt, and of any steps taken by His Majesty's Government in relation thereto.

SIR EDWARD GREY: It is not possible to lay Papers at the present moment.

London Police and the Public.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether an inquiry has been made, and, if so, with what result, into the case of two gentlemen, Dr. Gerothwohl, a British subject, lecturer at Trinity College, Dublin, and Mr. Lavalette, a Belgian, who, on the night of the boat race, were wrongly arrested at Vine Street police station, and not in Piccadilly as stated by the constables, and charged with being drunk and disorderly, and roughly handled by the police.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I have made inquiries into this matter. The charge of drunkenness which was brought by the police against the gentlemen mentioned in the question was dismissed by the magistrate, and I gladly accept the view that the police, who were maintaining order in Piccadilly on boat race night in circumstances of great difficulty, were mistaken on this point. But after the fullest consideration I find it impossible to impute blame to them in this matter or to entertain the graver charges made against them. If these charges are to be pressed, it must be by proceedings in a court of law, which are open to the hon. Member's friends.

Exmouth Burial Dispute.

SIR G. KEKEWICH (Exeter): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the Reverend G. P. de Putron, vicar of Withycombe, near Exmouth, recently refused to permit a Nonconformist minister to officiate at the burial of a parishioner in the parish churchyard, on the ground that the parishioner had died outside the limits of the parish; and whether having regard to the fact that the vicar was acting within his legal right, the Government will take steps to introduce a measure to amend the Burial Act so as to prevent the possibility of such occurrence in future.

MR. GLADSTONE: The case has not previously been brought to my notice, but I will make inquiry into it.

Post Office Mail Cart Drivers.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he can now give the result of his inquiries into the case of Robert Eyres, a mail-van driver, charged on Monday, April 2nd, at the Central Criminal Court, with furious driving, who stated in his defence that he was on duty from fifteen to eighteen hours a day, and that his horse, on the day of the alleged offence had been in harness for twelve hours; and will he state the hours usually worked by this man and the hours worked on the day in question.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I find that the man's duty ordinarily covered a period of fourteen and a quarter hours (and not fifteen to eighteen as stated by him); but of this period nearly five hours were his own for rest and refreshment. On the day on which he was arrested for furious driving twelve and a half hours had elapsed since he attended at the contractor's yard; and of this time four hours had been at his own disposal. I understand that the day's work is practically of the same length as that of drivers employed by private firms of carriers. The horses employed on these duties work for fourteen hours one day and rest the next. I am giving the question of these contracts my attention.

*MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Was this man employed directly by the Postmaster-General or was he employed by a contractor.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: No, Sir. I am looking into the conditions of these contracts.

Life Saving on Coasting Steamers.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make inquiries of his officers how many times of their own knowledge they have seen the boats provided for the safety of passengers or crew on coasting vessels actually in the water and the gear in order; and if he can ascertain from masters of coasting vessels how many times during the year the boats under their charge are actually lowered into the water.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): Special inquiries have been made into the matter to which my hon. friend refers. In the case of passenger vessels the Board of Trade surveyors now make a practice of seeing the boats lowered and also that the gear is in order at every survey. With regard to other coasting vessels no exact figures can be given, but these vessels generally have at least one boat in the water at every port for working purposes and the surveyor's reports tend to show that, when more than one boat is carried the other boats are generally lowered from time to time. The hon. Member is aware that a cautionary notice on this point is now in course of being issued to owners and masters by the Board of Trade.

Workmen's Trains.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he proposes to take any, and, if so, what, measures to confer upon the statutory tribunal described in the Report of the Select Committee on Workmen's Trains the right to direct that travelling facilities for workmen be provided in such manner as the tribunal deems best in districts where building development seems probable.

MR. KEARLEY: The Board of Trade have been in recent communication with the railway companies serving the Metropolitan district on the whole subject of the recommendations of the Committee, including of course the point raised in the Question. The replies received are now under consideration; meanwhile if the hon. Member will bring to my notice any particular case in which the desired facilities are not provided it shall be looked into.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Will Papers be laid before Parliament giving the particulars received from the companies.

MR. KEARLEY said he would like to see the communications before coming to a decision on the matter.

Education Bill Finance.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, what sums out of the £1,000,000 provided in the Education Bill it is estimated will fall to the share of Blackpool, Preston, Southport, and Blackburn respectively.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): As I stated on the First Reading of the Bill, the Grant will be distributed in aid of the local education rate upon terms to be laid down hereafter in the Code. The general principle upon which the Board of Education will proceed in the ultimate distribution of the new grant will be to have regard both to the actual increase of local burden consequent upon the Bill, and to the existing amount of the education rate. I cannot at this stage attempt any estimate of the sums that will fall to the share of any individual authorities.

MR. ASHLEY: On what data did the right hon. Gentleman base his estimate of £1,000,000 sterling?

MR. BIRRELL: I am not in a position to give that information.

Educational Bill Statistics.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state the number of separate school departments under head teachers in existence at the close of the last completed statistical year, classified as Council, Church, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Jewish, and British, and other undenominational school departments, respectively.

MR. BIRRELL: The numbers of separate school departments for the statistical year ending July 31st, 1905, are:—Council, 12,157; Church of England, 16,320; Roman Catholic, 1,843;

Wesleyan, 639; Jew, 24; British and other undenominational, 949.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state the number of children enrolled at the close of the last completed statistical year in Council, Church, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Jewish, and British, and other undenominational schools, respectively.

Mr. BIRRELL: The figures for the statistical year ending July 31st, 1905, are:—Council 3,083,990; Church 2,305,949; Roman Catholic 339,554; Wesleyan 135,868; Jewish 8,149; British and other undenominational 171,471.

Certificated Teachers.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state the number of certificated teachers engaged, at the close of the last completed statistical year, in Council, Church, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Jewish and British, and other undenominational schools respectively.

Mr. BIRRELL: To obtain the information asked for in the Question would involve enormous labour, the results of which would hardly be commensurate with the time and expense involved.

Orphan Home Schools.

*Mr. FERENS (Hull, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether orphan homes, having schools, will be able, in case the Education Bill becomes law, to retain the management of the schools, as at present, under Government inspection; and will they be entitled to receive Government grants as heretofore.

Mr. BIRRELL: I must refer the hon. Member to Section 38 of the Education Bill; the effect of which will be (if it becomes law, to leave the position of these schools much as before.

Powers of Local Authorities.

Sir G. KEKEWICH (Exeter): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, under the existing law, local authorities have power to prescribe instruction in secular subjects alone in some of the schools provided by them, while prescribing undenominational religious instruction in the rest; and whether the Education Bill will affect the powers of local authorities in this respect beyond the provisions therein as to facilities.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Answer to the first part of the Question is "Yes," and to the second part "No."

Fruit Culture.

Mr. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether His Majesty's Government is taking measures to give effect to the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Fruit Culture; and whether any steps have yet been taken to carry out the suggestion of the Committee that a special sub-department of the Board of Agriculture should be established to deal with matters connected with the fruit industry

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): The recommendations of the Committee on Fruit Culture are receiving attention, and we are in communication with other Government Departments with regard to such of them as do not fall exclusively within our own jurisdiction. We are in sympathy with the suggestion that the Staff of the Department should be somewhat enlarged so as to enable it to do more for the fruit industry, but some increase of expenditure would be entailed, and at present no definite statement on the subject can be made.

New Government Buildings.

*Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I wish to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether the furnishing trades generally will, at the proper time, be publicly informed that the Works Department are open to receive tenders for the supply of furniture and fittings for the new War Office and the other Government Offices, which are in course of erection; and whether it has hitherto been the practice to obtain furniture and fittings from one or two firms.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale): The furniture in the existing offices will, so far as possible, be utilised in the new buildings, and most of the additional articles required will be of the ordinary official patterns for which contracts are current. In certain cases not covered by such contracts competition will be invited from a large number of approved firms. It is not desirable to advertise for tenders from the whole trade; but any firm having a factory in or near London, where inspection of work in progress is possible, is allowed to tender on application, provided that proof is given of its ability to carry out work satisfactorily, and that the Government rules as to rates of wages are observed. It has not been the practice to obtain furniture from one or two firms.

London's Parks.

*MR. CREMER: I wish to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether any new contract has been recently made for the right to place chairs in the parks and to sell refreshments in the Kiosks; for how many years chairs were allowed to be placed in the parks without anything being paid for the right of doing so; when was the first payment made, and what was the amount; what amount was received last year; and, if any new contract has been made, what will be the amount paid during the present year.

MR. HARCOURT: The reply to the first Question is in the affirmative. No payment was received for chairs until 1896. In 1896–7 the sum received was £1,105, and in 1905–6, £1,210. A new contract has been made which will increase the receipts for the present year to £2,780. As regards refreshment Kiosks, certain re-arrangements have recently been under settlement for Regent's Park, Greenwich Park, etc., but they are not yet all settled, and the extra receipts cannot be finally stated.

Houses of Parliament—Refreshment Department, Wages of Employees.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Mid-Derbyshire, as Chairman of the Kitchen Committee, whether the food supplied, and the wages paid, to the waiters and other employees in the refreshment department of the House of Commons are in accordance with the trades union rate; whether, seeing that one-half the grant of £2,000, which is annually made by this House to the Kitchen Committee, was obtained to pay the employees fair wages, he will say whether the grant has been or is being used to pay such wages, or whether it has been used to purchase and store wines in the cellars of this House; whether, seeing that the wine, at present mainly champagne, in the cellars of the House is valued at nearly £6,000, the Kitchen Committee will either increase the price of each meal supplied to Members of this House and apportion the amount so received among the waiters and employees of the refreshment department, or dispose of some of the stock of wines to enable them to do so; whether, when provision has been made for adequately remunerating the employees, the Committee will resolutely prohibit the practice of tipping waiters or any other employees; and will the Committee present a complete financial statement and balance-sheet annually to the House.

MR. JACOBY (Derbyshire, Mid.): The wages paid, and the food supplied to the waiters, and other employees of the refreshment department are, in the opinion of the majority of the Kitchen Committee, fair and satisfactory. The conditions of employment being different to restaurants, hotels, etc., it is impossible to compare rates of wages. The grant of £2,000 which is annually made by the House to the Kitchen Committee is expended on wages for the employees. The amount paid in wages and salaries last year was £4,036 16s. 6d. The Kitchen Committee do not propose to increase the price of meals, and owing to the difference of opinion of Members of this House, have decided not to lay down a hard and fast rule as regards the practice of tipping. The Kitchen Committee will present its usual annual Return before the end of the session.

Physical Deterioration.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Local Government Board for Scotland have yet arranged to issue the parochial medical officers, sanitary inspectors, and inspectors of poor leaflets containing the opinions of the Committee on Physical Deterioration relative to ventilation and the bringing up of young children, with a view to the dissemination of information on these subjects

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The Board will shortly issue a leaflet on the management of young children. They have already issued a comprehensive circular on the control of pulmonary phthisis. The Board are considering what further measures may be recommended.

Balinakill Burial Ground.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the cause of the delay in finding a site for a new burial ground in place of that at Balinakill, in the parish of Uig, island of Lewis, which has been repeatedly reported to be overcrowded, and the coffins only covered with a few inches of earth.

MR. SINCLAIR: The proprietor has agreed to enlarge and otherwise put the burial ground at Balinakill into proper condition, and the work is to be commenced during the course of the spring. The delay appears to have been caused by the negotiations.

Congested Districts Board Report.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state when the Report of the Congested Districts Board for Scotland will be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. SINCLAIR: I hope upon an early day.

MR. WEIR: When, this month or next?

MR. SINCLAIR: It will be very shortly.

Inverness Fisheries.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that destitution prevails among the fishing population in the islands on the west coast of Inverness-shire; that the Congested Districts Board and the Fisheries Board have refused to help the population to provide fishing boats and gear and otherwise to develop the industry; and whether, under these circumstances, he will appoint a Committee, similar to the Mansfield Committee which reported on the sea fisheries in parts of Sutherland and Caithness in 1904, to report as to whether any steps can be taken to develop the fishing industry on the west coast of Scotland, or to assist the fishermen in the prosecution of their calling.

MR. SINCLAIR: No special information has reached me as to any exceptional destitution, and there is no present intention of appointing another Committee; but the state of the fishing industry and the general condition of the population referred to is under the consideration of the Government, in connection with legislation which is under preparation.

Irish Agricultural Schemes.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how soon does he expect the return of Local Contributions to the Cost of Schemes under the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Act, 1899, will be available.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): I am informed that it is not at present possible to state when this Return will be available. Certain necessary particulars have to be procured from local authorities throughout Ireland, who will be asked to furnish them with as little delay as possible.

Untenanted Land.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how soon does he expect the Return of Untenanted Land, ordered on 27th March, will be available.

MR. CHERRY: It is anticipated that this Return will be ready in about two months.

Juvenile Prisoners in Ireland.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of prisoners of twelve years of age and under sixteen years of age now in the local prisons in Ireland, and whether he will give particulars of the offence and sentence in each case?

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of prisoners of sixteen years of age and under twenty-one years of age now in the local prisons in Ireland, and whether he will give particulars of the offence and sentence in each case.

MR. CHERRY: In order to obtain the information asked for in these two Questions, reference to the several prisons in Ireland will be necessary, and this will take some little time. My right hon. friend will forward the information to the hon. Member as soon as it has been prepared.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why it is stated in the Report for the year 1904 of the governor of Belfast prison that twenty-five juvenile adults were incarcerated in that prison, when the Report for the same year of the governor of Maryborough prison states that all juvenile prisoners sentenced to one month's imprisonment and upwards are sent to that prison; and whether he will furnish particulars of the offences and sentences of the twenty-five juvenile adults incarcerated in Belfast prison referred to in this Question.

MR. CHERRY: The hon. Member is under a misapprehension. The governor of Belfast prison made no allusion to juvenile adults, viz., persons between sixteen and twenty-one years of age, nor did the governor of Maryborough prison allude to the subject. The statement made by the governor of Belfast prison was that twenty-five juveniles, viz., persons under sixteen years of age, were committed during the year. The governor of Mountjoy prison stated that all juveniles sentenced to one month's imprisonment and upwards are sent to that prison. Of the twenty-five juveniles committed to Belfast prison, four who were sentenced to a month's imprisonment or upwards were transferred to Mountjoy prison.

Cork Evicted Tenants—Case of Mrs. Mary Eagan.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners are now in a position to take some effective steps to bring about the reinstatement of Mrs. Mary Eagan in the farm of Caherduggan, Bartlemy, on the Nason estate, county Cork, seeing that the holding is still in the landlord's possession, practically derelict, and that the principal obstacle to the evicted tenant's reinstatement appears to be reluctance to give consent on the part of the agent to the estate.

MR. CHERRY: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have already approached the owner in this case through his agent, but have not received any reply to their communication. The Commissioners are again communicating with the agent on the subject.

Case of Patrick Foyle.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Estates Commissioners has been called to the case of Patrick Foley, of Fermoy, whose father was tenant of the farm of Consane, Watergrasshill, on the Lowe estate, county Cork, was evicted in 1880, and has since died, and to the fact that the holding is now occupied by another tenant, named Justin McCarthy, at less than half the rent paid by the evicted tenant; and whether, in view of these circumstances, the Estates Commissioners will take into consideration the claims of the son of the deceased tenant for an allotment of untenanted land not necessarily in the neighbourhood.

MR. CHERRY: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they have received an application for reinstatement from Thomas Foley, who states that he was a joint tenant with Patrick Foley and that both were evicted in consequence of the latter having fallen into arrear in the payment of his portion of the rent. The Commissioners will enquire into the case as soon as may be possible.

Condition of the Royal Canal.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what communications, if any, were addressed by the Board of Trade to the Midland Great Western Railway Company, pursuant to the Reports of the Board's inspectors on the condition of the Royal Canal; and will he explain why the Board of Trade held inquiries, in view of the expense to those who obtained them and to the State, if the Board are unable to give effect to the recommendations of their own inspectors, and to protect this public waterway from destruction.

MR. KEARLEY: General Hutchinson was appointed to inspect the canal in 1894, on a memorial received through five Members of Parliament, from fifty-five traders, asking for an inspection of the canal under Section 41 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888. Further complaints were received of the condition of the canal in the following year, and Sir Francis Marindin was appointed to make an inspection under the same section. The Reports of both General Hutchinson and of Sir Francis Marindin were forwarded to the Midland Great Western Railway Company, and further correspondence passed between the Board of Trade and the Company, who, in November, 1895, gave an assurance that no effort would be wanting on their part to ensure the carrying out of the various recommendations contained in Sir Francis Marindin's Report so as to maintain the Royal Canal in a satisfactory condition. Since the two Board of Trade inspections referred to, other inspections have been made on behalf of the Board of Control, a public body appointed by the Lord-Lieutenant under an Act of 1818, and composed of members of the Irish Board of Works. The functions and powers of the Board of Control as regards the canal have recently been fully explained to the Royal Commission on Canals, now sitting, and I shall be happy to furnish the hon. Member with a copy of the evidence bearing on the point. As I stated in my reply to the hon. Member on the 10th instant,† the Board of Control inform me that they are now considering the Question of further proceedings.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, having regard to the facts that the Royal Canal was constructed as a waterway for public use, largely with moneys voted by the Irish Parliament, was subsequently acquired and is now controlled by the Midland Great Western Railway Company, subject to the statutory obligation of maintaining the canal in a navigable condition for public use, that the railway company in their own interest have allowed the canal to become unnavigable, and that all these facts have been ascertained and reported by inspectors of the Board of Trade, whether the Board of Trade will, on behalf of the public, enforce the statutory obligation by compelling the railway company to execute the works of restoration and maintenance which that company's neglect has rendered necessary.

MR. KEARLEY: This is a repetition of the Question which I answered on the 10th instant,‡ and I can only refer the hon. Member to that Answer.

Kenmare Harbour.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that application has been made on a previous occasion for the loan of the dredger, now employed on the west coast, to improve the port of Kenmare; and whether he can arrange that this request will be complied with in the near future, seeing that it is urgently required at Kenmare.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): I am informed that the Board of Works have written to the County Council of Kerry asking whether they desire to have the use of the dredger "Sisyphus" on the usual terms, for the improvement of the harbour of Kenmare. The Board have been informed that their letter will be laid before the county council at its next meeting, on 10th proximo.

NEW BILLS.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES (No. 2) BILL.

"To establish a single franchise at all elections, and thereby to abolish university representation and to remove the

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 1165.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, clv., 1165.

Disabilities of Women," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Byles, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Atherly-Jones, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Masterman, Mr. Money, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. P. W. Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th June, and to be printed. [Bill 177.]

CROWN LANDS BILL.

Sir George Kekewich, Mr. Dundas White, and Mr. Butcher nominated members of the Select Committee on the Crown Lands Bill, with Two Members to be added by the Committee of Selection. (*Mr. Whiteley.*)

DEAN FOREST BILL.

Sir George Kekewich, Mr. Dundas White, and Mr. Butcher nominated members of the Select Committee on the Dean Forest Bill, with Two Members to to be added by the Committee of Selection.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

SUPPLY [6TH ALLOTTED DAY]

Considered in Committee:—

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

1. £602,700, to complete the sum for Customs.

2. £1,429,500, to complete the sum for Inland Revenue.

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,290, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council."

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) raised objection to the payment of £2,000 as salary to the Lord President of the Privy Council and also to the proposal to pay an additional £100 a year to the noble Lord's private secretary. With regard to the Lord President of the Council, he said that nothing had been paid to the holder of that office for some years, and he regretted very much that the Government should be willing to vote the sum of £2,000 to the head of a department the administration of which did not cost more than £12,000, the greater part of this money being paid in salaries. He also took exception to the payment of another £100 a year to the noble Lord's private secretary, thus making that gentleman's salary £300 a year, in addition to a large sum he was receiving as clerk to one of the Departments. It was simply throwing £2,100 in the gutter. What would the noble Lord do for such a salary? He felt that when he (the speaker) could not get 2,000 farthings for his people in the Highlands of Scotland he had a right to complain of such excessive expenditure; and so long as it was carried on by any Government, whether Liberal or Conservative, he should protest. More especially did he protest because the present Government was pledged up to the hilt to retrenchment and reform. If the Lord President of the Council must have a salary he should be paid a reasonable sum and not one sixth of the whole expenses of the Department. What was the meaning of it? He would like an Answer from the hon. Member, for he could not allow the Vote to pass without some satisfactory explanation. He had a Motion down to reduce the Vote by £2,100, but he hoped the hon. Member would see his way to give some pledge whereby the sum of £2,000 might not be paid to an ornamental officer. Then with regard to the £100 to be paid to the secretary. He did not know anything about either the noble Lord or his secretary, but he did know that such proposed expenditure was excessive. Let the Government be true to its colours, and not create such a post as the one proposed. It was the creation of a new salary—and such a salary!—to which he objected. Let them be fair in the matter, and not throw away one-sixth of the expenditure of the whole Department upon one man, just because he was a noble Lord, and then follow that by throwing £100 at the head of a private secretary who was already receiving £200! What was that extra £100 for? Was he going to take off the burden from the shoulders of the noble Lord? He protested against it, and unless he got a satisfactory Answer that the Government would wipe out some, at any rate, of that £2,000, and the £100, he should deem it his duty to move a reduction at a later stage.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.) said he strongly approved of the hon. Member's desire to effect economy, but he did not think the hon. Gentleman was quite aware of the ground upon which the £2,000 was paid. The late Lord President of the Privy Council was also President of the Board of Education, and as President of the Board of Education he received the sum of £2,000 a year. The present Lord President of the Privy Council was now in the House of Lords, as was also the late Lord President. The President of the Board of Education was now in the House of Commons, consequently the Lord President of the Privy Council represented the Education Department in the House of Lords. If the Committee refused to vote this money, he would be the only member of the Cabinet who was not in receipt of a salary. He felt bound to say that with regard to the noble Lord's work, he fully deserved a salary of £2,000, which was the smallest amount paid to any Cabinet Minister. With regard to the £100 to be paid to the private secretary, he would point out that that Secretary had to do Departmental work and received an additional £100, as did a private secretary engaged by any other Cabinet Minister. Therefore, his hon. friend would see that there was no extra expense at all in the matter. The Lord President of the Privy Council was not given £2,000 because he was a noble Lord, but as salary as a member of the Cabinet, representing the Education Department in the House of Lords. His hon. friend might be right or wrong in his view of official salaries, but there was no reason why he should take exception to this particular salary, unless he was prepared to take exception to all other salaries.

*MR. WEIR pointed out that he took exception to the salary because it was a new salary. It meant an additional £2,000 on the taxpayers of the country.

MR. MCKENNA: My hon. friend is mistaken upon that point.

MR. WEIR said there were excessive salaries. He was always prepared to vote salaries to men who did the work. As to the private secretary, of course he had to do some work, but what additional work was he doing which necessitated an additional payment of £100 a year, making a payment in all of £300, together with another £600 or £700 a year as clerk to one of the offices? It looked too much, and he strongly objected.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) also objected. He said the Lord President of the Privy Council was now to receive a salary of £2,000 for 1906–7, which he did not receive in 1904–5. They were told that he received this sum because he represented the Board of Education in the House of Lords. Surely if he represented the Board of Education, the salary should be paid out of the Education Vote? He would also like to know what the noble Lord's duties were; there should be more information upon the matter laid before the Committee. He begged to move a reduction of £2,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £5,290, be granted for the said service:—(*Colonel Legge.*)

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said the late Tory Government was the most extravagant Government that had ever been in existence. The question before the present Government was one of economy, and unless they practised it they could not hope to carry out the promises they had made. The £2,000 in question would pay a number of Members of Parliament a decent salary; therefore if the Government would strike it off from the Vote they would have some money to deal with the question of salaries to Members of the House. They were told that this sum was the smallest salary received by any member of the Cabinet. That, he contended, was not a fair way to judge it. They should judge the question by the amount of work done. What was the amount of work done by the Lord President of the Privy Council as compared with the President of the Local Government Board or the President of the Board of Trade? Everyone knew that the Lord President's office was a sinecure, and that some friend or favourite was shot into it for the sake of the salary. They were expecting something better from the Liberal Government, and if they could not get it then they ought to divide the Committee, in order to let the Government know that they meant business. With regard to the increase of the salary of the private secretary, his hon. friend had not explained it sufficiently. He (the speaker) understood that the private secretary was to get an extra £100, making his salary £300, beyond the salary he was getting as clerk in another Department. If that was so, then who was the favourite? What work did he do, and if he was properly employed in another office how was it he had time to be a private secretary at all? They were not attacking the Government on a Party question at all. It was a question of dealing with money belonging to the nation, and they wanted to economise. He agreed with his hon. friend who mentioned that the sum proposed was a large one to pay the Lord President. It did indeed seem a very large sum to pay to a gentleman who had not much to do. He wished to put a question before the hon. Member. What were the hours of labour of the Lord President of the Privy Council? Such officials objected to men having eight hours a day. What, he wished to know, were their hours; were they three hours, or what? He wanted a definite answer to his question from the hon. Member, and if he did not give it to-day, he would have to on another occasion. When people high in office objected to working men having an eight hours day, he wished to know what number of hours per day they worked. He took it that they had a very short day indeed and that a good deal of their time was spent for—well, otherwise than in their Department. Why was it he could never find these officials before eleven o'clock in the morning?

*THE CHAIRMAN hoped the hon. Member was confining himself to the Privy Council Vote.

*MR. MORTON explained that he was not referring to any other officials than those mentioned on the Paper before the Committee, and he again repeated his questions. He thought if these high officials were to put in an eight hours day, the Government would be enabled to get on with half the staff and at half the expense. Considering the difficulties of getting money for objects which the Government had promised, he desired to impress upon the Committee the necessity of effecting economy in every direction.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) declared that the assertions of gross extravagance brought against the Conservative Administration, though freely made, never had been and never would be proved. The late Government created a state of things by which, to save the country's resources, the Lord President of the Council discharged the duties of the President of the Board of Education, and it was absolutely impossible to deny that at the present moment the country was finding £2,000 more for the services of the Department than was the case under the late Administration. The Financial Secretary of the Treasury had placed his defence of this salary upon the wrong ground. The Lord President of the Council was receiving this salary not because he was discharging the duties of the Board of Education, for those duties were now being discharged by a right hon. Gentleman in this House, but because he had still the duty of putting through a number of Orders in Council not relating to education at all, but which had to be submitted to the Sovereign and the Privy Council by other Departments. He had heard no reason yet why the clerk who under the late Government used to perform the duties of Private Secretary to the Lord President, and never had a salary of more than £200 for the work, should now receive an additional £100 a year. They were awaiting an explanation of that. The fact was apparent that the country got the same services under the late Administration for less money than under the present Administration.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E. R., Holderness) supported the reduction. The present Government were returned to Parliament for peace, retrenchment, and reform, and this was their idea of economy. The hon. Member for Sutherland asked what work was done by the Lord President of the Council. He should like to ask if that Minister did any work at all.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said it was most refreshing to find this new-born zeal for economy on the part of hon. Gentlemen above the gangway on the Opposition side. He would like to remind the Committee, however, that under the new arrangement the House had the benefit, which they had not in the last Parliament, of questions being answered by the President of the Board of Education across the floor of this House.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Is that worth £2,000 a year?

MR. WHITLEY said he would point out in the second place that the Minister who was in receipt of the salary in question would be charged with the duty of conducting the Education Bill through the House of Lords, and he did not think that would be a sinecure. He certainly thought that during the present year the occupant of the office would earn his money. But the hon. Gentlemen who were showing this new zeal for economy must remember that Ministers of the Crown in the late Administration held 60 or 70 company directorships between them, and that the country was now benefiting by the Prime Minister's having reverted to the old practice in that respect.

THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. Gentleman was not entitled to extend that argument.

MR. WHITLEY said he only desired to point out that it was a consideration amongst others which made it well worth the while of the Committee to pass the Vote under discussion.

*SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston) remarked that the Government not only proposed to spend £1,000,000 a year in carrying out their new education proposals, but they now further proposed to give a new Minister a salary of £2,000 a year to carry those proposals through the House of Lords. He thought that formed a very curious commentary upon the pledges which Liberals gave at the recent election to pursue an economical policy, and he commended to the consideration of the Committee their inconsistency in that respect. As far as he was concerned, he would certainly oppose the Vote.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he could not find words to express his astonishment at the attitude of hon. Gentlemen above the gangway on the Opposition side. Those who were absolutely the most recklessly extravagant in every shape and form in the last Parliament, and for years past, were now the very persons who were stirred by every consideration of economy. Therefore, the only effect of the action of hon. Gentlemen above the gangway on the Opposition side was to incline him to support the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, which he was not naturally inclined to do. He agreed thoroughly that the salary in question was altogether too high, and as they were at the beginning of a new Parliament, and would have to discuss the Estimates week after week for some time to come, he ventured, with the most earnest desire to be friendly, to advise the Government that they should take the bull by the horns and make up their minds to effect considerable economies in the public service. Running all through the Estimates there were salaries altogether out of proportion to the work done. There were the most glaring inequalities in the matter of salaries—gentlemen receiving such sums as £1,500, £1,200, and £800 a year, after which there was a sudden drop, and persons, whose services were quite as necessary to the State, and who worked just as hard, received remuneration which was surprisingly small. In the late Government reform was not to be expected in these matters in any way; he never remembered the slightest attempt made to effect economy of any kind. But here was a Liberal Government which, if it had come into power on anything, had come in upon the cry of economy. The country was anxious that there should be in matters of this kind considerable retrenchment, and he thought the Government would be well advised if they altered the scale which now prevailed, and showed the people outside that there was in this matter some real and solid difference between the present Administration and the last. If a beginning could not be made on this Vote, he invited some statement from the Secretary of the Treasury on behalf of the Government that in these days, when there was so much want out of doors, and the question of unemployment was so pressing, the Government seriously intended to make some effort to reduce public expenditure, and to see if they could not get these posts filled at much more moderate salaries than were now paid.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said it should be noticed that whilst the Government were asking for £2,000 for the post of Lord President they refused an increase of salary to the abstractors employed in the office. The abstractors had asked for an increase of £1 in their salary and to be put on the same plane as other civil servants in regard to annual leave, but they were not to have a moment's consideration. A private secretary, however, who was on one of the highest rungs of the Civil Service ladder, was to receive £300 a year extra for writing the letters of the Lord President, as to whose duties the Committee had no sort of information except that the Lord President had to sign certain documents. They were now being asked to place upon the revenues of the country a charge of £2,000 a year in order that a job might be found for a noble lord who could not otherwise be admitted into the Government. He hoped this matter would be pressed to a division in the interests of economy.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.) asked if it was necessary to have the Education Board so very largely increased. Already they had two representatives of that Board in the House of Commons, and he hoped it would be possible in the near future, instead of having both the President of the Board of Education and the Parliamentary Secretary in this House, to at least have one of them in the House of Lords.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said he did not think the hon. Member for East Clare would succeed in convincing the Committee in regard to the extravagance of the late Administration. He thought new Members would find that the hon. Member for East Clare was never to be taken seriously. New Members would find that the hon. Member had only looked at two columns on the Estimates paper. They would see from the Estimates for 1905–6 that there was an item of £7,605 for the Privy Council and under the new Administration these estimates were £9,512. That was the most clear and definite answer to the charge that the late Administration was more extravagant than the present. There were many hon. Members on the Opposition side who would stand by hon. Members on the Ministerial side in their determination to carry out the pledges they made in favour of true economy at the last election. He looked forward with confidence, therefore, to the result of the division which would shortly take place.

MR. MADDISON (Burnley) said that the man who was in ignorance of the waste and extravagance of the Tory Party must indeed have been out of politics for thirty years. He did not think that anything connected with education was the best thing upon which to begin economy. But he could not help expressing the opinion that these salaries were put far too high. There was the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Education Department who would have to pilot the Education Bill through the House, and discharge his onerous duties at the Education Office, yet his salary was exactly the same as that of the Lord President of the Council. He had not a word to say against the noble Lord, in fact he had a great admiration for him, but he strongly objected as a democrat to giving a Member of the House of Lords, for doing probably one-third of the work the President of the Education Board had to perform, exactly the same salary. He thought the Government should take seriously into consideration the overhauling of all the Departments, and adjust the salaries to the duties performed. He did not think they could have all salaries of the same size—he did not believe that every man was worth the same amount of money, but in this case a Member of the House of Lords was receiving exactly the same salary as a Minister in the House of Commons, and he thought that was not fair to the taxpayers of the country. There were a great number of pressing social reforms, and the only way to get these reforms was to reduce wasteful and unnecessary expenditure. While he did not regard hon. Members opposite as being really in earnest in this matter—[Opposition cries of "Oh, oh!"]—he pressed the Leaders of the Liberal Party not to consider the saving of a few hundred pounds a small thing. They must remember that everything saved that was not actually needed was so much gained for beneficent purposes.

Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) said it appeared to him that the main reason for voting this salary was that the Lord President of the Council would be called upon to pilot the Education Bill through the House of Lords. He wished to know if the Government anticipated that the Education Bill would go through in one ordinary session, or was it going to occupy the whole time of the present Parliament? If the Bill was to occupy the time of this Parliament, the Lord President would assuredly earn his salary, but if the measure was disposed of in one session, then it was not easy to see what work could be found for the noble Lord to justify his salary, unless he was to become a maid-of-all-work to the Government in the House of Lords. There was some justification for the principle that payment should be made according to results, and he quite agreed with the remarks made by the hon. Member for East Clare as to the overpayment of some and the under-payment of other officials. He thought the hardest worked Minister on the Treasury Bench was the Patronage Secretary.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said this discussion had brought out in very bold relief the extreme carelessness with which the present Government was formed. The Government had begun very badly with education, and in his opinion they would end badly with a great many other things. The best thing to be done would be for the Financial Secretary of the Treasury frankly to acknowledge the faults of the Prime Minister in forming his Cabinet.

*The CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. Member that we are discussing the Privy Council Office Vote and the works of that Office, and not the formation of the Government.

Sir GILBERT PARKER said he was going to suggest how the question of economy came in. The Government were clearly committed to a policy of retrenchment, and the point he was dealing with was the carelessness shown in the formation of the Government.

*The CHAIRMAN: Order, order. The hon. Member is out of order in discussing the carelessness shown in the formation of the Government.

Sir. GILBERT PARKER appealed to the Secretary to the Treasury to deal frankly with this question and acknowledge the mistake that had been made.

*Mr. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet) said it was surprising to him to hear the expressions of astonishment by hon. Members opposite in regard to the attitude the Opposition were taking up on this Question. They had been accused of displaying a new-born zeal for economy, but it was not of recent birth, it had been with them for years. It might have lain dormant, but the atmosphere of those benches had a stimulating effect. That was no new experience to hon. Members of this House. Politicians did endeavour sometimes to make amends in Opposition for opportunities neglected when they were in power. It was an experience which hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side had had in great abundance, and the example which they had set in bygone years was one which it seemed to him the present Opposition might properly follow. It might be that they were unfortunate in having selected this particular Vote, because it concerned education more or less. It had been said that the Government could not afford to economise on education. He thought that was true. If there was one thing in which the Government could afford to be liberal to themselves, it would be in education. He and his friends were in the position of not being able to support the Government with respect to most of the pledges which were given on its behalf at the general election and by means of which it came into office, but there was one item in the programme of the Government in regard to which they were in a position to give their united support. They could support it in regard to its promises of economy and retrenchment. It was the one thing on which they could offer any help to the Government, and he earnestly hoped hon. Gentlemen would not reject the offer in this particular case with which they were making a beginning. It had been said with perfect truth that there were abundant opportunities for economy in bygone years, and that they had not always been able to avail themselves of them. They should regret that, and they should now show their repentance by making up for lost time. For that reason he hoped the Amendment would be carried to a division. He would heartily support it.

MR. McKENNA said the spirit of economy which had been manifested by hon. Gentlemen opposite had been somewhat tardy in making an appearance. It was welcome at any time, and when he had to resist some of the appeals made by the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, he hoped he would have the support of hon. Gentlemen opposite in resisting those appeals. He was rather surprised at this moment to see the great historic Tory Party following the lead of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: The best leader they ever had.

MR. McKENNA said that hon. Gentlemen opposite would have his support whenever possible if they sought to reduce the Estimates on the ground of economy. What were the circumstances of the present case? They had the great historic office of Lord President of the Council which had attached to it membership of the Cabinet. This particular member of the Cabinet had duties to perform quite independently of his duties as member of the Government; he had to answer for the Education Department in the House of Lords. He did not refer to his particular duties as Lord President of the Council, because he fully admitted that those duties were very insignificant. He thought that any member of the Government who had to answer for the Education Department in the House of Lords was not overpaid with a salary of £2,000. That appeared to him sufficient ground why the noble Lord in question should receive this salary.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Does the Gentleman who answers in the House of Lords for the Board of Trade get a salary?

MR. McKENNA: The noble Lord who answers for the Board of Trade has no existence.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: I understood that Lord Granard answered for the Board of Trade.

MR. McKENNA: His Lordship has no official existence.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Has the Lord President of the Council any official connection with the Board of Education?

MR. McKENNA: Yes, he has now. He did not think it was really necessary to go into details. The hon. Member for East Clare had expressed the desire that the members of the Government should take this opportunity of making deductions from salaries in the House of Lords. He regretted that he was not authorised by any of his colleagues in the Government to offer to make any reduction in their own individual salaries. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Somerset had asked whether the salary would be continued after the Education Bill had passed through the House of Lords. The noble Lord was not receiving his salary simply on account of his duties in connection with the present Education Bill; he would answer in the House of Lords for the Education Department for all purposes so long as he held office. The salary was in no way dependent on the conduct of the present Bill. The hon. Member for Gravesend had complained of the extravagance of the present Government. He would remind the hon. Member that his figures were wrong. The total of the salaries paid to the President of the Council, the President of the Board of Education, and the Financial Secretary of the Board of Education was £5,200, and not £7,500. It was perfectly true that the salary of the private secretary of the Lord President was higher now than last year. The reason for that was that the private secretary had not only to deal with questions addressed to that Minister, but also to hold himself in readiness by remaining in the precincts of the House during the whole of the debate; he might have to remain here day after day, and perform in addition his departmental work at the office. He did not think the private secretary was overpaid by an addition of £100.

Mr. PAUL (Northampton) said the hon. Member for Sheffield had done his best to bring the discussion down to the level of a Party squabble. The salary of the Privy Seal was abolished by Mr. Gladstone in 1885 and revived by the late Lord Salisbury when he was in office. He hoped that as sensible and intelligent men they would treat these recriminations, he would not say with contempt, but he would say with the respect—for it meant the same thing—they deserved. The serious question which they had to consider was whether they should give their sanction, if not to the creation, to the revival of a salaried sinecure. It was perfectly well known that the Lord President of the Council used to have some very important duties to discharge, and the Vice-President was his subordinate. Now, he believed, besides the mere formal signing of documents, the Lord President of the Council had no official duty of any kind to discharge. Lord Londonderry when President of the Council was also President of the Board of Education, and under that arrangement there was a saving of £2,000 a year of public money. It was said that Lord Crewe would answer for the Board of Education in the House of Lords. He was not sure on the constitutional question whether the Lord President was still an official connected with the Board of Education. He was under the impression that the Board of Education was created by statute a separate Department, and that the Lord President of the Council was no longer connected with it at all. If it was said that Lord Crewe had political functions to perform in the House of Lords, what about Lord Ripon, who had to answer for his Department and lead in the House of Lords, and was a most important Member of the Government? Lord Ripon was universally respected both by supporters and by opponents; he did his work exceedingly well without any salary at all. The Committee ought to pause before sanctioning an arrangement whereby an officer was to be voted a salary of £2,000 a year for doing nothing at all.

Mr. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash) said that the point brought forward was really worth the attention of the Financial Secretary. When the Education Act of 1902 was before Parliament it was conducted by two Ministers, one in each House; but now there was a new Bill before Parliament it was said to require three Gentlemen, each with a salary. That did seem to him to be a matter which required meeting and justifying. In this particular instance the duties of the noble Lord would be to pilot the Education Bill through the House of Lords. It was really a perfectly open question whether he would have any duties to perform at all. They had to see the Bill sent to the House of Lords before they knew whether he would have any duties to perform or not. He therefore thought the Government should first have made certain that the noble Lord would have any duties to perform before they put down the salary. He admitted that the attempt to pilot the Bill through the Lords might be a difficult duty—and he hoped it would be unsuccessful—but he did not think it justified an extra £2,000 a year on the Estimates. He hoped that the hon. Gentleman who had moved the Reduction would persist and go to a division, because it would show to the Committee and to the country that, whatever might have been the failures of the Party to which he belonged in the past, they might at any rate be said to be deriving some benefit from their misfortunes. The hon. Member for East Clare had taunted them with exhibiting a new-born zeal for economy, but he thought it was very hard upon them if, having suffered a great reverse, they were not now to try to assume some of the airs of virtue which had won for Gentlemen opposite their places on the Treasury Bench. If they had not gone to the country with all that assumption of virtue which they were now endeavouring to prove was absolute hypocrisy and had not paraded the country with the cry of economy, many good men who were now wandering about the country would be in the House and they themselves would not be gracing the Treasury Bench. The matter was of considerable importance, for they would be setting an example to the municipalities throughout the country—and they all knew that the ratepayers had to contend with an undue growth of salaries—and he hoped the reduction would be pressed to a division.

MR. STUART WORTLEY said that the hon. Member for Northampton had accused him of bringing the discussion down to the level of a Party squabble. The hon. Member never addressed the House without bringing forward some such charge; but he could not progress a single inch in establishing that charge without conveniently ignoring the fact that hon. Gentlemen on his own side of the House had roundly accused the Tory Party of extravagance in the past; and if the hon. Member supposed that the Opposition were going to sit tamely under these charges without answer he was very much mistaken.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he would ask the Committee not to follow the example of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down by indulging in recrimination on one side or the other. He did not recognise the right hon. Gentleman as an economist, but as a bad example. However, there was no principle which was more loudly professed by the majority of Members elected to this House than that of economy; and if they were to have economy they must begin somewhere. It was no use saying that they were in favour of the general principle of economy and then when there was a clear case for economy to go in for extravagance. He thought the hon. Member the Secretary of the Treasury had made the best defence he could of this Vote. But what were the facts? The Lord President of the Council was a very important official in former days. He had a great many duties to perform. He had to look after cattle disease and education, although no one could understand the association between the two. But there was now a Minister for Agriculture who looked after cattle disease, and a Minister for Education who looked after the schools. Therefore the Lord President of the Council was deprived of all the duties which that high officer used to perform. In the last Parliament—that wicked and extravagant Parliament—the Lord President of the Council combined the functions of two Ministers, but was only paid the salary of one. There was now a very distinguished Minister of Education who very efficiently performed the difficult duties which fell to his lot; and there was also a Minister of Agriculture. Then there was a Lord President of the Council created for what purpose? To read out Answers to Questions dictated for him either by the Minister of Education or by the very able permanent officials, and £2,000 a year was supposed to be not too large a salary for that duty. There was the Lord Privy Seal who had responsible duties to perform. Lord Ripon was the Leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Lords, and had to be present in the House of Lords every day; but he did not get a single penny of salary. The only difference he could see between the position of the Lord President of the Council and that of the Lord Privy Seal was that the latter was independent of salary, and the former was not. He was very sorry for the former, and if that noble Lord were a working man he was just the man he would like to give a salary of £2,000 to for doing nothing. But that was not the duty of Parliament. What was the use of hon. Gentlemen coming to this House, representing the masses of the people of the country, and demanding money clamouring for public and social improvements from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and at the same time voting a salary of £2,000 a year to a nobleman for doing nothing except adding a little ornament to the Treasury Bench in the House of Lords?

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said that as an advocate of economy he had listened with interest to the debate. He quite agreed with the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool that they must begin somewhere with economy; but he should like to begin at the right place, whereas the hon. Member would begin at the wrong point. The position, as he understood it, was that Lord Crewe was a member of the Cabinet. Did the hon. Member maintain that a member of the Cabinet ought not to receive a salary? He believed that a man should be paid full value for the work he did. Lord

Crewe had occupied the position of Viceroy of Ireland and other offices. He had been chosen by the Prime Minister to be one of his Cabinet, and did any one say that £2,000 a year was too large a sum to pay him for sharing the responsibility of carrying on the business of the Empire? It was said that Lord Ripon, who was also a member of the Cabinet, did not get a salary. Lord Ripon might be a very rich man and it was very good of him to serve his country for nothing; but it did not follow that other men could do that in a spirit of generosity. If it was right that Lord Crewe should be in the Cabinet, it was right that he should be paid a salary. He took part in a division in this Parliament where a large majority of the House, including the hon. Members below the gangway opposite, voted in favour of paying Members of Parliament a salary of £300 a year. He wondered whether his hon. friend, when the country was sufficiently prosperous and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was willing to grant it, would refuse to accept that salary of £300 a year. That was the common sense view of the matter. Economy was a right and proper thing, but he did not think it was fair to try and knock off the whole of the salary of a man who was eminently fitted to be in the Cabinet and who took his share of the responsibility of the government of the Empire.

*MR. GEORGE FABER (York) said that this was a matter which concerned every Member of the Committee. He knew something of the duties of the Lord President of the Council because he had had the honour for many years to occupy the position of Registrar of the Privy Council. In those days the Lord President of the Council was head of the Education Department and, of course, he was paid a salary. But what had happened since the present Government came into office? The representatives of the Education Department were now both in the House of Commons. They wanted to eat their cake in the House of Commons and for the Lord President to enjoy it in the House of Lords. He had not a word to say against the noble Lord who was the Lord President of the Council; there was no doubt that he was a man of great ability and well qualified to fill any position, but that was not the point. The point was that the Government had started a new mode of retrenchment. They were going to begin by giving £2,000 a year to a member of the Cabinet who had no work to do, and they gave him a secretary, with a salary of £300 a year to help him to do nothing. The statement that the Lord President would answer Questions for the Education Department in the House of Lords seemed to him to raise the constitutional point whether he could properly do so. It appeared to him that if the noble Lord answered any Questions for the Education Department he could only do so as a matter of courtesy and not as a matter of right. He thought the recent Education Act prescribed that the duties should be performed by the Minister who presided over the Board of Education and his subordinates. Therefore, as Lord Crewe did not come into that category, if he answered Questions at all it would only be as a matter of courtesy, and he was going to be given £2,000 a year for doing that. The Prime Minister might have been pressed by the circumstances of the case, and perhaps was not able to pick and choose when he settled his Cabinet as he did. If that was so, as head of a Party professing retrenchment, the Prime Minister should, nevertheless, "face the music," and retain Lord Crewe in the Cabinet without any salary at all.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND thought that this was a more serious matter than hon. Members appeared to realise, and he did not think the hon. Member for Mid Glamorganshire had made the case of the Government any better by laying so much stress on the fact that Lord Crewe was a Cabinet Minister. The hon. Member seemed to think that being in the Cabinet carried a salary with it, but as far as he knew there was no such office known to the Constitution as a member of the Cabinet.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said he did not advocate that the noble Lord should be paid for his work in the Cabinet. He had stated that Lord Crewe had great influence and great responsibility in regard to his work in the Cabinet.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said the hon. Member certainly gave the impression that because a gentleman was a member of the Cabinet he should have a salary, and deserved one, but, as he had said, there was no office known to the Constitution as that of a member of the Cabinet. Some of the gentlemen in the Cabinet held offices which carried salaries, but others did not. The office held by Lord Crewe, against whom personally no one could say a single word, was not one which carried a salary with it. The point was that the Government were creating a new salaried office. They had their representatives of the Board of Education in this House, they were creating a third representative of education in Parliament who was put in the House of Lords and received a third salary. The Government might very easily have bestowed the office of Lord President of the Council upon some other member of the Administration who was already in possession of a salary or somebody who would not require any salary at all. He thought, with all due respect to the hon. and learned Member for Mid. Glamorganshire, that if they were to begin economy at all they should begin with the House of Lords. The hon. Gentleman had said that his hon. friend the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool was on the right tack, but that he was beginning at the wrong end. In his judgment, however, they were beginning at the right end. Let them start their economies in the House of Lords, and that could be done by making some new arrangement in this matter. In the late Administration the Lord President of the Council without salary was the same person as the President of the Board of Education with salary, and the Government were creating a new office with a new salary in the House of Lords.

Mr. McKENNA: The salary is not new; the salary has existed for centuries.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said the hon. Gentleman was perfectly right in what he said to a certain extent, but he was sure the hon. Gentleman would agree that under the late Administration the two offices were combined. What they complained of was that the Lord President of the Council who was not the President of the Board of Education was to get a salary. It might be said that Lord Crewe was a most capable person for the post. There was no doubt he was, and the cruel part to his mind in dealing with matters of retrenchment was that they could not act without seeming to attack individuals. Nobody wanted, so far as he knew, to say a word against Lord Crewe. No doubt he deserved his salary as much as the Secretary of the Treasury did, if he had work to do for it. It was simply a question of putting on the Estimates an item which did not appear last year. People might say it was only a couple of thousand a year, and no doubt that was a small item, but if they were seriously to attempt to cut down these Estimates, they had to begin by cutting down small items and eventually, if they succeeded, the items added together would represent a very large sum. He did not know what the people of this country who desired curtailment would do, but having a few weeks ago listened to the wail of the hungry children going to school, and the cry of the aged people who had lost their strength and had to go to the workhouse, he would not be a party to fresh expenditure when it could be obviated by appointing another person. Moreover, he would point out that in regard to the House of Lords there was great scope for economy.

*Mr. MORTON said he quite agreed that this was not a personal matter, with regard to the noble Lord who occupied the office which they were debating, and they did not intend that it should be so. He was, however, delighted to have the opportunity of discussing a question of this kind, not on the salary of some fourth class clerk, but upon that of a noble Lord who held office and was a member of an assembly which was much too expensive already, and that they could discuss it without reference to the merits or demerits of Lord Crewe. He wanted to know the hours of labour in this Department, and he was entitled to an answer. It would not do for the occupants of the Front Ministerial Bench to think that they could ignore Members because they were humble and came from a far away constituency like Sutherlandshire. They must have answers given to the questions asked in a gentlemanly, proper, and, above all, in an intelligent manner. He had asked what salary this gentleman who occupied the position of private secretary got in the other Department with which he was connected, but no answer had been given. Then again they had had no answer given to the question why this gentleman was to have £100 more than was paid last year. He was afraid that some sort of favoritism was being displayed by somebody. He had asked for this information and hoped that his hon. friend would give it without obliging him to make two or three more speeches. For his part, he did not want to be hard upon the Tory gentlemen above the gangway when he found them assisting in the matter of economy. He remembered that ten years ago reformers obtained assistance from them and got £1,000 knocked off the Estimates for the House of Lords in one night. He wished the Committee to remember that these gentlemen had been living a very wicked life for the last ten years, perhaps because they were overpowered by somebody from Birmingham, or somewhere else. Now that they were free apparently from that restraint, instead of sneering at them, he wanted to encourage them. With a little encouragement of that sort they might, during the next six or seven years, at least effect economy in some of the items of expenditure. Let the Liberal Party take care that they did not within the next two or three years sink to the same low level as that of the late Tory Administration. He held that it was not the duty of a Member of this Committee to vote with his Party on questions of this kind and to say nothing. Hon. Members should do their duty to the country and not make questions of economy Party questions. His complaint was that the Government which had gone had so managed that these two offices should be held by one man, and that, therefore, the present Government could surely have found in the other House a man who would have taken up the office of Lord President of the Council, an office in which there was nothing to do, without the salary. Some hon. Members thought that all Ministers ought to get a salary of £2,000 a year, but his hon. friend the Paymaster opposite who did many times the amount of work that the Lord President did, got no salary, nor did the junior Lord of the Treasury who did ten times the work. He wished to know what time these gentlemen in the Privy Council Office gave up to their duties, and he wished to know the name of the gentleman who acted as secretary, and the amount of his salary in the other Department in which he was engaged, and he hoped the Financial Secretary would give him that information without obliging him to make another half-dozen speeches on the subject.

MR McKENNA said he was only too anxious to give the hon. Gentleman an intelligent answer, but he thought he would agree that it would have been much better if he had wanted an answer to these questions that he should have given some notice of them. He could not pretend to have all these details, the names and the salaries of all these gentlemen, at his fingers' ends. Had the hon. Member given notice that he required to know the name of a particular secretary, and what his hours of labour were, and what his salary was, he would have been most happy to have furnished the information.

*MR. MORTON said he would repeat the Question on the Report stage.

MR. McKENNA said that so far as the office of the Lord President of the Council was concerned, that office carried a salary of £2,000 a year, and whenever that salary had not been paid it had been waived by the voluntary act of the noble Lord who held the office. It would be quite open to Lord Crewe, if he held another office, to abandon the salary.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND pointed out that the office of Lord President of the Council was usually coupled with another office, carrying a salary, and that therefore the salary attaching to the office was usually saved.

MR. McKENNA said the hon. Gentleman was quite right in many instances. He believed Lord Rosebery held another post and therefore did not take the salary, and also the Duke of Devonshire, but there were many other Lords President who did not hold other posts and who took the salary. [AN HON. MEMBER: Name them.]

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MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Name one in the last twenty-five years.

MR. MCKENNA said if the hon. Gentleman would give him two minutes he would supply the information. He did not think hon. Members opposite were justified in pressing this matter very far. The office of Lord Privy Seal did not carry a salary, but when that was the only post held by a Cabinet Minister a salary was attached to it. [AN HON. MEMBER: Two wrongs do not make a right.] He did not say it was wrong, and he did not think it was wrong. He thought a Cabinet Minister was entitled to a salary. He submitted with confidence to the Committee that it was a most reasonable thing that every Cabinet Minister should receive a salary of £2,000 a year, and when they found a Cabinet Minister did hold the post of Lord President of the Council, to which a salary of £2,000 was attached, he did not think they should ask him to abandon the salary. He did not think a Cabinet Minister was over-paid for the work he did.

MR. H. H. MARKS: What work?

MR. MCKENNA said that if the hon. Member, who had never served in a Cabinet, would ask any of his friends who had had that honour, they would tell him that the work done by a Cabinet Minister was not over-paid at £2,000 a year. The work of the Lord President of the Council was no doubt very small, but the post carried with it a salary of £2,000 a year, and the post was always held in conjunction with a position in the Cabinet. Constitutional practice did not permit of the payment of a Cabinet Minister as a Cabinet Minister. Therefore it was only reasonable to revive the salaries attached to these offices from which the departmental duties had largely disappeared, and allow the Cabinet Minister to draw the salary, because his work as a Cabinet Minister involved serious responsibility and a great amount of time in addition to other work.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said he did not regret this discussion in the slightest. The Financial Secretary of the Treasury had had many words of wisdom addressed to him by hon. Members opposite, and had been well lectured upon the subject of the Government carrying out the pledges they gave during the election to effect economies. He hoped those words would sink into the heart of the hon. Gentleman, and that he would not fail to remedy this matter and see that this sort of thing did not occur in any other Department. He reminded hon. Gentlemen opposite that the Government was young in office, and appealed to them to allow this matter to drop and to give the Government another chance, especially as many of the Ministers were new to office—

> "For while the lamp holds on to burn
> The greatest sinner may return."

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) said the reason why his hon. friends behind him had taken up this matter was not because they objected to the payment of the Lord President of the Council, but because, as a matter of fact, when the office of the President of the Board of Education was created, it was on the distinct understanding that a new office of profit should not be created. Now that the new President of the Board of Education had been appointed, the Government had been under the necessity of reviving an old office for which a salary had been paid, but which salary had been allowed to lapse. They opposed this because the Government, both in Parliament and out of it, had said that by the reduction of unnecessary items they were going to save money. The hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty had suggested the withdrawal of the Motion because, as he said, it was the first offence and the present Administration was a young Government. Surely the offence was worse when it was committed by a young Government pledged deeply to the policy of retrenchment. That policy had found effect by a proposal to increase expenditure and the revival of an old office which had been abolished long ago. For these reasons they could not consent to the withdrawal of the Motion.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said that in his first speech the Secretary to the Treasury gave the impression that this salary of £2,000 was paid partly for the work done as representative of the Education Department in the House of Lords, but in his last speech he gave the impression that it was paid for the noble Lord's position as a Cabinet Minister.

MR. McKENNA said that if he had given that impression he was wrong. This salary was attached to the office of Lord President. He had already explained what were the particular duties performed by the present holder of that office.

MR. SUMMERBELL said he hoped this Motion would be pressed to a division. Every hon. Member who had gone through the recent general election would agree that one of the principal arguments used during the contest was that there was room for economy, and he would like to know where the Government were going to commence. So far as he was personally concerned he would go into the division lobby with any Party which was prepared to commence the work of economy in regard to the expenditure of the nation.

LORD TURNOUR asked what was the exact nature of the departmental works performed by the Lord President, and how many hours a day he gave to that work. He would also like to know how often the Lord President had been at his office during the time he had filled the appointment.

*COLONEL LEGGE said that he had no intention whatever of taking the advice of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, and he proposed to carry this matter to a division. In his opinion the reply they had received from the Secretary of the Treasury was exceedingly unsatisfactory. It was said that Lord Crewe was to receive £2,000 a year because he was a Cabinet Minister. He wished to point out to the House that salaries were not paid because right hon. Gentlemen opposite were Cabinet Ministers but because they were heads of Departments. All Lord Crewe had to do was to give the replies to Questions put by noble Lords in the Upper Chamber upon the subject of education, and that duty could be equally well performed by a gramaphone. He should press this Motion for reduction to a division, and he hoped to receive the support of all Members who were in favour of economy.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 134; Noes, 232. (Division List No. 52.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland-Hood, Rt Hn Sir Alex. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Barnes, G. N.
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brace, William
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Byles, William Pollard
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Clough, W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway)
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Glover, Thomas
Haddock, George R.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harris, Dr. Frederick R.
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff sh.)
Hodge, John
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, Walter
Hunt, Rowland
Jenkins, J.
Jowett, F. W.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Liddell, Henry
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down. S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Killop, W.
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James E. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n

Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Price,C.E.(Edinburgh,Central
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards,T.F.(Wolverhampt'n
Richardson, A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts,S.(Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Rothschild,Hon.Lionel Walter
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Scott,A.H.(AshtonunderLyne
Shackleton, David James
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowdon, P.
Stanley,Hn. Arthur(Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Steadman, W. C.
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thomson,W.Mitchell-(Lanark
Thorne, William
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Walker,Col. W.H.(Lancashire
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Walsh, Stephen
Wardle, George J.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wilkie, Alexander
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester
Wilson, A.Stanley(York,E.R.
Wilson,W.T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wortley,Right Hn.C.B.Stuart
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Colonel Legge and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald

NOES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A.Acland(Christchurch
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Asquith,Rt.Hn.Herb'rt Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley Jones, L.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,JohnWilliams(Dev'np'rt
Benn,W.(T'w'rH'ml'ts,S.Geo.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J H.(Essex,Romford)
Bethell, T. R.(Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsay)
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh
Bryce,J. A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn SydneyCharles
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,RtHnRichardKnight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Coats,Sir T.Glen(Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Corbett,CH.(Sussex,E.Grins'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, William Randal
Crossley, William J.
Davies,David(MontgomeryCo.
Davies, W. Howell(Bristol,S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh,S.)
Dewar, John A.(Inverness-sh.
Dickinson,W. H.St.Pancras,N
Duckworth, James
Duncan, J. H. (York,Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gladstone,Rt.HnHerbertJohn
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, Cecil B.(Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor(Mon.,S.
Herbert,T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hooper, A. G.
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones William(Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb,Edmund G.(Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Leese,SirJosephF.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H.(Cheshire,Wirral
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt.Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lynch, H. B.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mansfield,H. Rendall (Lincoln
Marks,G.Croydon(Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W.(Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan,J.Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN(Doncast'r
Norton,Captain Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson,W.H.M.(Suffolk,Eye)
Philipps,J.Wynford (Pemb'ke
Pollard, Dr.
Price,Robert John(Norfolk,E.)
Priestley,W.E.B(Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards,Thomas(W.Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,Rt. Hn. E.(Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson,SirG Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman

Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel,Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw,Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A. Lyulph(Chesh.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sutherland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor,Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas,Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E)
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset E
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walters, Joon Tudor
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward,W Dudley(Southampton
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, J. D.(Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams,Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson,A(Elgin andNairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson,Henry J. (York,W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wodehouse,Lord(Norfolk,Mid
Woodhouse,Sir J T(Huddersf'd
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Original question again proposed.

*MR. CLAUDE HAY moved a reduction of £100, to call attention to a number of points in the Vote. There was one amount for abstracting clerks. He noticed that there were now two abstractors. instead of one, and the pay of one of them had been increased. He wished to know why there were two abstractor clerks in the Privy Council office. Had the work increased so that two men were now required instead of one? The right hon. Gentleman opposite had not been able to tell them exactly what the duties of the Lord President were, except that he might have to represent the Education Department in the House of Lords. Upon that point he hoped they would have a little more information from the Secretary to the Treasury, so that the Committee would not be asked to vote blindly for two clerks under a Radical Government, which was pledged to economy, when under a wicked and extravagant Tory Government one clerk was considered sufficient to do exactly the same work. There was nothing to indicate that the work of the Privy Council had largely increased. Whilst upon this item he should like to point out that one of these salaries had been increased by £5. He wished to know why that increase was not £6 or £4. Personally, he thought the abstractors were an ill-paid and over-worked class of public servant. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,190, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

MR. MCKENNA said the point raised by the hon. Member was a very simple matter. There were not two clerks of the abstractor class because there was more work; the total number of clerks was the same as last year. What had happened was that where before a junior clerk was employed it had been found necessary that the work should be done by a clerk of the abstractor class. The junior clerk employed in 1905–6 was not now employed, but the work formerly done by him was undertaken by a clerk of the abstractor class. The reason why the salary was £5 a year more was because it was considered to be reasonable, and because it was the usual rise for that class of work.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said it appeared from the face of the account that one of the clerks had not got his increase.

MR. MCKENNA said the particular abstract clerk referred to had received his full salary. He had not been appointed for a whole year, and the fact that he had received a less sum than the others was accounted for in that way.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON said it was a pity that did not appear on the face of the Paper. He was not imputing blame; he only wanted information.

LORD TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham) called attention to an item in the Vote for special trains, and said it seemed to him that they ought to get more information in regard to it. He understood the charge was for the conveyance of members of the Privy Council to Windsor. He wished to know whether it was necessary to have special trains. He knew that some great officers of State thought it beneath their dignity to travel in anything but a special train.

MR. MCKENNA said it was the immemorial practice for the expenses of the Privy Council to be paid when attending at Windsor and elsewhere, with the exception of occasions when they went to Scotland. He assumed that the Treasury had taken the view in the past that the expenses were so great when they went to Scotland that the Privy Council should bear the cost themselves, but that in the case of shorter journeys it should be defrayed by the Treasury.

LORD TURNOUR said they should have their expenses paid by ordinary trains. It seemed to him unnecessary that they should travel short distances by special trains. He wished to know the number of occasions on which special trains were used, and whether the members of the Privy Council could not have travelled by ordinary trains.

MR. MCKENNA said the expenditure last year was undertaken by the right hon. Gentlemen whom the noble Lord was at the time supporting. No exception was taken by the noble Lord or his friends to the practice in this matter of the late Administration.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said the hon. Gentleman had not replied to his observations. He wished now to ask categorically what the hon. Gentleman intended to do to improve the position of the abstractors.

MR. MCKENNA said that so far as he had been able to examine their work he had not been satisfied that they were underpaid. Their work was not of a very responsible character. For the class of work done they got a very fair allowance.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 62; Noes, 293. (Division List No. 53.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn. Sir Alex. F
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Ashley, W. W.
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Essex, R. W.
Faber, George Denison (York)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harris, Dr. Frederick R.
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edmds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S)
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Nield, Herbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Starkey, John R.
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Claude Hay and Mr. Mitchell-Thomson.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Asquith, Rt. Hon Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley Jones, L.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn John Williams (Devonport
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Branch, James

Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cherry, R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst’d
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, William Randal
Crossley, William J.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Farness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael T.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc’r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal E.)
M‘Callum, John M.
M‘Crae, George
M‘Kenna, Reginald
M‘Killop, W.
M‘Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester
M‘Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M‘Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast’r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O’Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O’Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O’Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O’Grady, J.
O’Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O’Malley, William
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S’thampton)
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb’gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm’th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh’mpt
Richardson, A
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf’rd
Robinson, S.
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas E. (Manchester)
Scott, A H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn. A Lyulph (Chesh.)

Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith. D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson, J. W. H (Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. de R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson, A. (Elgin and Nairn
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk Mid)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Original Question again proposed.

LORD TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham) said that he wished to move that this Vote be reduced by the sum of £60, for the purpose of calling attention to the item of £60, included in incidental expenses for washing.

THE CHAIRMAN said it was not usual to move a reduction of £60. The hon. Member should move a reduction of £200.

LORD TURNOUR then moved that the vote be reduced by the sum of £200. Were they to understand that this washing, for which £60 was charged, only took place in certain cases? And what was the reason for the washing? [AN HON. MEMBER, "The noble Lord is very funny."] Yes, to put down washing among incidental expenses was very funny indeed, and he wanted to know more about it. Was the washing connected with the Privy Council Office? If so, it seemed to him to be rather a large sum for that object. There ought to be more details in regard to these incidental expenses. Then there was an item of £45 for newspapers for the Privy Council Office. That seemed to be rather a large sum. He did not know whether the members of the Privy Council belonged to *The Times* and *Standard* Book Clubs. What newspapers were taken in? [AN HON. MEMBER, "*The Daily Mail.*"] He hoped the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would give the Committee further information on these two points.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,090, be granted for the said Service."—(*Viscount Turnour*).

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet) asked whether the Financial Secretary of the Treasury would give the Committee some information in regard to the item on page 212, with regard to extra coal porters and charwomen. In the case of all the other charges, the number of people were inserted, such as five messengers, one office porter, one fireman, and so on, but in the case of the coal porters and charwomen, no numbers were given, and only the total sum was inserted. It would, he thought, be of advantage if the particulars could be given.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool) said he wished to call attention to the expenditure upon special trains, used for the purpose of conveying Privy Councillors to Windsor. There was a very effective express train service from Paddington to Windsor, which performed the journey in twenty-five minutes, and these trains ran every hour. He could not therefore see the necessity for providing Privy Councilors with special trains. If the Privy Council was held at Balmoral, the ordinary express trains were also very good.

MR. HARVEY (Rochdale) wished to call attention to an item of £8 for postage, and asked whether the stamps were halfpenny or penny stamps?

MR. McKENNA said he congratulated his hon. friend upon the Question he had put. It was of as great importance as, or at all events of equal importance to, those which had preceded it from hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House. If hon. Members who had asked questions had taken the trouble to write to him, he would have ascertained the details which they wished to know about. But he could not carry in his memory details as to washing or the number of towels or other articles washed, or the number of porters and charwomen employed and their wages, the newspapers which were taken in and various other particulars as to which he had been asked for information. It was absolutely impossible to give hon. Members the information now, but upon a subsequent occasion he would do what he could to secure it for them. He thought the question in regard to special trains was a very reasonable one, and he had already promised to inquire. He believed that no special trains were run to Scotland.

LORD TURNOUR said he was prepared to withdraw his Motion for reduction, but he might point out that he did not ask for full details, but only for some details. He did not want particulars as to towels or anything of that kind. They appreciated very much the implied compliment which the Financial Secretary had paid them as to their criticism, and he would like to say that he had tried to emulate the industry which the hon. Gentleman himself showed last session.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) said that in regard to the question of notice which had been raised, he might remind hon. Members that it was not till a quarter past eleven o'clock last night that they were told what Votes were to be taken.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) said he was much surprised at the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, because if he desired to know what the business of the House on the following day was to be he could always ascertain it at Question time. The Members of the Government were present at that time to answer any Question as to the business of the House, and if the hon. and gallant Member had asked for information as to the Votes to be taken it would have been supplied.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry) moved the reduction of the vote by £150 in order to obtain some information from the Financial Secretary of the Treasury in regard to the increased salary of the Lord President's secretary. He was sorry not to have been able to give him notice of this point, but, as had been pointed out, they did not know until last night what Votes were going to be taken. If the hon. Gentleman wanted to have some longer notice, perhaps he would devise some means of letting them know a little sooner when the Votes were coming on. They did not wish to embarrass the Financial Secretary in any way in the discharge of his duties, but in the course of debate on the salary of the Lord President they had heard that the office was not attended with any great amount of work, and one would have thought that out of a salary of £2,000 a year the noble Lord might have paid whatever was necessary for the salary of a private secretary. He could not see that any case whatever had been made out for the payment out of public funds to the secretary of the present Lord President of the Council of a larger salary than was paid to the private secretary of the last Lord President. He knew that there were a great many hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Second Bench on the Ministerial side of the House who, although quite capable to fill the post of Lord President, filled the posts of private secretaries to Ministers—a most important post—without any salary at all. He did not know whether it was in order to rise to the trade union rate of wages among private secretaries, which had advanced in the last two months, or whether it was contended that this particular gentleman had more work to do, that this proposal was made. No doubt the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary of the Treasury would tell the Committee, but he should not have thought that, judging by the salaries of other private secretaries, who had a great deal more work to do, that £200 was a bit too low for the private secretary of the

Lord President of the Council. He begged to move the reduction of the vote by £150.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,140, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Bridgeman.*)

MR. McKENNA said he did not in the least complain of receiving no notice of questions of the kind which the hon. Member had put to him. He had only asked for details about the washing of towels and the supply of newspapers and matters of that kind, the particulars of which he could not be expected to know off-hand. In regard to the point which he had raised, he thought the hon. Gentleman was under a misunderstanding. The private secretary of every Cabinet Minister—although he believed there were exceptions in regard to chief private secretaries—received a salary of £300 a year. In most cases Ministers had two private secretaries, and £400 a year was divided between them. In the present case it concerned the salary of the private secretary of a Cabinet Minister who had only one private secretary, and therefore he received £300 a year. In the case of Cabinet Ministers at the head of Departments, the private secretary was not the private secretary of his chief as a Cabinet Minister, but his private secretary in regard to the affairs of the Department as a whole, and he was usually taken from that Department. In the present case the Lord President of the Council as a member of the Council had a private secretary. That private secretary had, in fact, the usual additional salary paid to all other private secretaries, and he could see no reason why this private secretary should be mulcted in his salary, and should be paid at the same rate which applied to any other private secretary. For many years past hon. Members now on the Opposition side of the House had voted for a private secretary receiving additional remuneration for any additional duties he had to perform. The private secretary of a Cabinet Minister was fully entitled to the additional salary of £300 which he received. The hon. Gentleman had called attention to the fact that last year the private secretary of the Lord President of the Council received only £200, but in that year the Lord President had another private secretary. The President of the Board of Education, who was also Lord President, had last year two private secretaries for whom £400 was provided, and they received £200 each. The present private secretary of the Lord President would, however, receive £300 a year as the private secretary of a Cabinet Minister.

*MR. MORTON: What does he do?

MR. McKENNA did not think it was desirable that he should be obliged to define the duties of the private secretary of a Cabinet Minister. He might say, however, that he had to assist the minister in every detail of his work, to get up information for him from Blue-books and other sources. He was the recipient of a great many confidential communications, and was in a position of trust, and if hon. Gentlemen would look at the great names of private secretaries to Prime Ministers in the past, he was sure he would agree that £300 a year was not too much to pay.

MR. STUART WORTLEY thought that his hon. friend was fully justified in raising this question, and although no one wanted to be hard upon the Financial Secretary of the Treasury, he must point out that the explanation which the hon. Gentleman had now given was not the explanation which he gave earlier in the evening. Probably he was wrong in his explanation given in the earlier stage of the debate and was now right. He now seemed to say that the Cabinet Minister had one private secretary at the higher rate of salary instead of two secretaries at the lower rate, as was the case when the head of this Department had two sets of departmental duties to attend to. From unfamiliarity with the subject, no doubt, a different and probably incorrect explanation was given earlier in the evening.

MR. McKENNA pointed out that Lord Crewe had only one private secretary although as a Cabinet Minister he was entitled to two.

*MR. MORTON said that the Duke of Devonshire, who held this office, also held the office of the President of the Board of Education, and he possibly had a great deal to do. He did not think his hon. friend had put the matter quite fairly.

This private secretary not only got £300 a year but probably a large salary in another department. They could not fairly judge this question of salaries without further information. The real point in this case was that there was no necessity for a private secretary at all, because the Lord President had practically nothing at all to do, and therefore the private secretary could not have much to do either.

*MR. GEORGE FABER (York): said that this matter disclosed two anomalies. The first was the gift of a salary of £2,000 a year to a man who admittedly had nothing to do, and the second was the giving of £300 a year to a gentleman as a secretary to help him to do nothing. In the old days the Lord President of the Council had a great deal to do, and he had two private secretaries at £400 a year. In those days they received £2,400 a year for doing a great deal of work. Now the Lord President and his secretary got £2,300 for doing nothing.

Question put.

The Committee Divided:—Ayes, 73; Noes, 294. (Division List, No. 54.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn Sir Alex. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C W
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gill, A. H.
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harris, Dr. Frederick R.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'd
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Nield, Herbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Starkey, John R.
Summerbell, T.
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Watt, H. Anderson
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Bridgeman and Mr. Lane-Fox.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams (Devonp'rt
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, William Randal

Crossley, William J
Dalmeny, Lord
Davies,David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Duckworth, James
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael F.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glover, Thomas
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb,Edmund G.(Leominster)
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire,Wirral
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks,G.Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts., Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid.
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly,James (RoscommonN.
O'Malley, William
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W H. M. (Suffolk,Eye
Philipps,Col. Ivor(S'thampton.
Philipps,J.Wynford(Pembroke
Pollard, Dr.
Price,C. E.(EdinburghCentral)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk,E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson,Rt. Hn. E.(Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson,Sir G.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Chas. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton underLyn
Sears, J. E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H. (SomersetE
Thorne, William
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward,W. Dudley(Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason,John Cathcart(Orkney)

Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson A. (Elgin and Nairn
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid)
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersfd
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said he wished to move a reduction in regard to the item of £598 for messengers in the office of the Privy Council. It had become apparent after what had been said by the Secretary of the Treasury that the work of this Department practically did not exist, and that the only duty that fell upon the Lord President of the Council was that of representing the Board of Education in the House of Lords when required. It must be clear that the duties of the Lord President were so insignificant that the office could not require this sum of money spent on messengers. What did the five messengers do during the whole of their official hours? In order that the hon. Gentlemen might afford an explanation, he begged to move that the estimate be reduced by £500.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,790, be granted for the said Service." — (*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

Mr. McKENNA said the hon. Gentlemen had entirely misunderstood the purport of the previous discussion. It must not be assumed that because the Lord President had little to do the work of the Department was not going on. There were the Orders in Council to be dealt with, and there was the judicial department of the Privy Council. The salaries of the messengers were not at all in excess of the requirements of the office. While it might be perfectly true that the titular head of the office had not very much to do, the office itself was a hard-worked office, and he did not wish it to go out as a result of this debate that the work was not serious and onerous. It was a serious and onerous work, and there were not any more men in the Department than were absolutely necessary.

Mr. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said that while there was reason in the previous two Votes for an expression of hostile opinion there was no reason whatever why the Committee should be called upon to object to the salaries of these five messengers, the salaries of whom in no case exceeded £150. Consequently he thought the Committee would be well advised to allow such moderate salaries to pass without criticism.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said that if there was an office there must be a door-keeper. He had had occasion to call at the Colonial Office that afternoon on business, and he would not have been able to find the gentleman he wanted had there been no messenger. He could understand the attack that had been made upon the salary of the Lord President, and even upon that of his secretary, but when it came to attacking messengers, who were mostly Army pensioners, that was a different thing altogether. Hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side were not at all artistic in the work of obstruction, and though they would no doubt improve as time went on, they had shown clearly this afternoon that they knew nothing about the business.

Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E). said they had listened to two very remarkable speeches. They had been told by members of the Labour Party that the Opposition did not understand their business as a Tory Party, and then they were told by the hon. Member for South Tyrone with much greater authority that they did not understand their business as obstructionists. He did not understand that anybody with whom he was associated had been guilty of obstruction. Hon. Members, calling themselves Labour Members, were getting into the habit of dictating, not only to the Government, but to the whole House, telling them what ought to be done, and expecting it to be done instantly. So far as he was concerned, he should have been content to advise his hon. friend to withdraw his Amendment, but after the speeches to which they had just listened he did not propose to offer that advice.

MR. MADDISON (Burnley) did not believe that the discussions this afternoon had been at all uninstructive, because they had revealed the great Tory Party in their lowest depths. After having practically the expenses of the Army and Navy doubled in twelve years they were now occupying the attention of the Committee first by an abortive Motion about an item for washing, and now the hon. Member for Hoxton, who was a great social reformer, had chosen five poor messengers for attack. This was Tory social reform! The hon. Member first of all called them lazy, and said they had nothing to do.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I absolutely repudiate the statement of the hon. Gentleman.

MR. MADDISON said he was going on to say that the hon. Gentleman said that in effect. He did not wish to do injustice to the hon. Member, but he had pointed out that this was an office in which there was nothing to do. If so, then there could be nothing for messengers to do. The noble Lord had said Toryism and obstruction were not the same thing. They were constantly hearing what Toryism was not, but never what it was. Perhaps the noble Lord would enlighten them as to what it was.

LORD R. CECIL: Economy.

MR. MADDISON asked what economy was. [AN HON. MEMBER: Toryism.] If Toryism was economy, and Tories were really seeking after economy, why did they not support those who some time ago wanted to take a million or two off the Army? It was not until it was a matter of a few messengers that Toryism rose to the occasion.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) said that the hon. Member for South Tyrone was not justified in asserting that those who supported the reduction of the Vote were unsympathetic towards a deserving class of men, who were, perhaps, not too well paid. They simply asked for information. There was a Lord President, with £2,000 a year, who was said to have nothing to do, and there were five messengers who were supposed to assist him.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The effect of the reduction would be to take away the whole pay of the messengers.

MR. SLOAN said that the reduction of £500 was moved simply to raise the question. When Members asked questions with regard to the Estimates, they should, at least, be treated with ordinary courtesy. If there was obstruction it came from the Government side of the House.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) asked the Financial Secretary of the Treasury to explain what were the duties of the coal porters, and why they were paid only 10s. per week.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said he did not know whether the hon. Member for Hoxton had ever seen the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council sitting, but anyone who did so could not fail to be struck by the exceedingly inexpensive manner in which they conducted their operations. The complete absence of pomp and circumstance in that august tribunal was extraordinary. It performed functions of vast importance over a great part of the world in the simplest possible form and without any Imperial accessories.

MR. BRIDGEMAN said that apparently the doctrine below the gangway was that if salaries were under a certain point they must not object to them, but the policy of hon. Members on the Opposition Benches was to find out if there were any unnecessary expenses. Their economy was all-round economy, and they were doing their best to show their impartiality. The point was not whether the messengers were overpaid or underpaid. They all wanted to see them paid a proper rate of wages. The question was whether there were too many messengers. In the office in question there were twenty-seven persons, including firemen, coal porters, and a superintending charwoman, for whom it was fair to assume the messengers did not work. Excluding those persons there were twenty-four officials, and five of them were messengers. Besides these messengers there were extra messengers whose numbers were not shewn in the return. The point was whether the number of messengers was not excessive.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton) asked how many coal porters there were working at the salary of 10s. a week, and what number of hours they worked. He did not think the Party to which he belonged desired to receive any advice from Members above the gangway as to the particular way in which they should conduct their business. While not prepared to quibble they were prepared to raise questions which affected working-men employed by various Departments of the State, as well as to raise questions affecting high salaries.

AN HON. MEMBER asked what were the duties of the Nautical Assessor and what they had to do with the Privy Council.

MR. MCKENNA said the Nautical Assessor assisted the Judicial Tribunal in Admiralty cases, and received two guineas a day for his services. He regretted that he was unable to give the number of coal porters. Their duty was to deliver coals at stated hours, and at other times these men, who were often pensioners, were free to earn money at other occupations. They were very glad to get this additional work. The messengers were needed to do work for the Judicial Council.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) asked whether he was to understand that some of the coal porters were pensioners, and therefore were paid a lower rate of wages.

MR. MCKENNA: I said no such thing.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said the hon. Gentleman stated that they were pensioners able to earn money in other ways. What he wanted to know was whether these men, being pensioners, were paid a lower rate of wages.

MR. MCKENNA said he made no such assertion. What he said was that these men received 10s. a week because the work only occupied a very little time, and they had leisure to do some other occupation. They were men who were very glad to get this additional work, but did not wish to be employed all their time at it; and, indeed, they could not be so employed.

*MR. CLAUDE HAY said he was perfectly sure the messengers of the Privy Council would know that he was not against them, and if it were in his power he would move an increase in their wages, even at the expense of the Lord President. What he had been anxious to find out was why five messengers were wanted in an office when the head of the office, receiving £2,000 a year, was declared to have no work to do. He was not in the least desirous of troubling the Committee to divide, and after the discussion, which had been very instructive, he would ask the leave of the Committee to withdraw his Amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

4. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £25,243, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Civil Service Commission."

COLONEL LEGGE asked for an explanation of the item for postage.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY said the Commissioners were responsible for the examinations as to the educational qualifications of entrants into the Civil Service and also for the medical examinations of candidates. In some Departments the proportion of retirements from pulmonary and other diseases had been rather high. As to the fitness of candidates for admission to the Civil Service, all depended on the methods which the Commissioners adopted in connection with the examinations. It was the practice to depend in past times on the reports of the medical practitioners employed by the entrants themselves. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would be able to give the Committee the assurance that the medical examinations were now conducted by men employed by the Commissioners.

*Mr. CLAUDE HAY said the Civil Service Commission was practically an independent body. That being so, when the Commission wanted anything the Treasury had little power to resist the demand made. Those who had had any experience of the Civil Service Commissioners were aware that they treated the public in a very arbitrary manner. It was difficult to get any information from them. If the Civil Service Commission made a demand on the Treasury for more clerks, the Treasury had practically to give in without being able to satisfy themselves that the demand was justified. The Estimates for the coming year were in excess of those for the year 1905–6, and he hoped the representative of the Treasury would be able to state to the Committee the reason for the increase. There was nothing to show that the lower grade Civil servants, or the second division clerks, had received any increase of pay beyond what they were entitled to, and, therefore, there was all the more reason to inquire why the Estimates should now be given at a larger figure. He wanted fuller information in regard to assistant examiners, for whom a larger amount was put down. There was also an increase under the head of advertisements of examinations. He asked the Financial Secretary to give some information as to the methods adopted by the Department in the selection of the newspapers in which these advertisements appeared. Personally he had heard complaints as to the unsatisfactory manner in which the distribution of advertisements was carried out by the Commissioners. He wished to know also whether the relationship between the Commissioners and the Treasury was satisfactory or whether something might not be done to give the Treasury more effective control over their operations so as to ensure that the services of the Commissioners would be more advantageous to the public, and above all, that the expense of the Department should not be increased. The work of the Commissioners had a far reaching effect indirectly upon the education of the country in consequence of the method in which they framed their demands in the matter of examinations for the Civil Service. In that way they were able to influence a great deal of the public school life and the university life of the country. He hoped the present Financial Secretary would be able to declare to the Committee that he proposed to carry out very definite and drastic reforms in connection with the Department.

Mr. McKENNA said the hon. Gentleman had raised a very wide question. His own experience at the Treasury was far too short to enable him to express any strong opinion at the moment. He frankly admitted that the Question raised deserved most careful consideration, and he could assure the hon. Member that it would receive that consideration. The relations with the Treasury were similar to those of other Departments, and upon points of detail it was often difficult for the Secretary to the Treasury to reply. The postage item represented a convenient book-keeping arrangement with the Post Office in relation to the conveyance of parcels, and for correspondence the Commission had the power of franking with other Departments. The doctors conducting the medical examinations were appointed by the Commission, they were paid fees, and their reports were independent and free from suspicion.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.) said he was not sure whether the Civil Service Commission was independent of the Treasury by Act of Parliament. The Financial Secretary was necessarily placed in a position of difficulty in speaking for a Department which had to do with a number of other Departments. It was not always possible to give a complete answer in regard to questions raised, and he hoped the hon. Gentleman would always receive from the the House the same fair treatment which he himself had received during the two years he held the office of Financial Secretary of the Treasury. In regard to the work of the Civil Service Commission, he thought there were one or two small matters to which attention might be called with a view to an improvement in their methods. He hoped the Committee would keep these points in view, but that they would not unduly press the Financial Secretary who had been but a very short time in office. He was sure that any representations which might be brought before the hon. Gentleman would be considered by him, and that they would be brought to the notice of the Departments for which he had to answer. It had been suggested that the Civil Service Commission should be placed more under the Board of Education. That would involve a considerable amount of administrative reform, and he hoped that the question would not be approached without careful and serious consideration.

*MR. REES said he had been associated with the Civil Service Commissioners for about thirty years as an examinee and an examiner, and he had always found them an exceedingly polite and courteous body discharging their functions efficiently and well. As to the medical examinations, so far from there being the danger indicated by the hon. Member opposite, if there was any danger at all it was that the doctors were too ready to "spin" candidates, and find them unfit for the public service. As the hon. Member for Hoxton had called the Commissioners arbitrary, and had said it was difficult to get information out of them, he thought it right to get up and say so much, for the important and extensive functions performed by the Commissioners were indifferently appreciated by their critics.

MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton) asked whether, if a candidate were rejected by the medical officer, his fee was returned.

MR. McKENNA was understood to reply in the affirmative.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said there did not appear to be any attempt on the part of the Government to carry out in this Department their promises of retrenchment and reform. If he understood the matter aright, the Treasury appeared to have practically no control over the expenditure of this Department. He was glad to hear that the Treasury was responsible, and he hoped that next year, when the Committee came to consider this Vote, they would be able to judge whether the promises of retrenchment and reform had the slightest chance of being carried out by the present Government. He found in the Vote no less a sum than £912 for temporary men and temporary boy messengers, compared with £840 last year. That meant that under the present *régime* the system of temporary messengers was not only not to be diminished, but actually to be increased. He contended that if any Department was to be efficient it should not employ temporary assistance, but have a permanent staff to deal with the work. There was nothing worse than casual labour. Then he found charges for overtime in two divisions of the assistant clerks. Any man of practical experience would agree that the system of overtime should be done away with. If a proper staff was employed and a push of work arose on occasion, the staff would be willing to do it; but the system of paying for overtime was most objectionable and led to abuses. Then he noticed an item of £1,500 for copying. He presumed what was meant by that was that certain work which could not be adequately done in the office was sent out and paid for. [AN HON. MEMBER: That was done by your Government.] Yes, but they had to look to the new Government to adopt more progressive measures; and he suggested that appliances for copying, which had now been brought to great perfection, should be used, and that would lead to less expense. Then there was the important item of £18,130 for assistant examiners. He noticed that their fees ranged from 12s. 6d. to £3 3s. per day. Could the Financial Secretary of the Treasury say how many examiners there were, and what was the average fee paid to them? He did not know whether the hon. Member for the Montgomery Boroughs received the three guinea fee. There were many other items which one might comment upon if there were time, but he thought that sufficient had been said to demonstrate that this Department would do very well with an overhauling. He agreed that it was a most useful and painstaking Department, but he was not satisfied that it was conducted on the best lines, and there was ample room for drastic changes which would make it more effective.

*MR. REES said he wished to state that he never was in the Department, and had no connection with it, except as one who had examined for it, and had been examined by it, and had some knowledge of its functions and character, which was, he thought, wanting in some of its critics.

*MR. J. WARD said that at the end of the accounts of the Department, there was a sum of nearly £1,000 for incidental expenses, of which there was no explanation. He could not help thinking that if a trade union secretary brought up his accounts with a lump sum of £1,000 for incidental expenses, with no explanation, he would get a very warm half hour at the annual meeting of the trade union. He wanted some details as to what these incidental expenses were.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) complained that naval cadets now, instead of being examined by the Civil Service Commission, had to pass the Admiralty Board and then undergo a written examination by Oxford University. He thought that this fact pointed towards the possibility of a vast amount of favouritism. The Civil Service Commission was above suspicion, and there should be no hole-and-corner business in examinations for the public services. But the surprising fact was that although the work of the Commission had diminished in the way he had indicated, and in other ways, the expenditure had not diminished. The whole system of examination for naval cadetships was extremely unsatisfactory, and yet we were spending as much upon this Commission as we did in the past. He supposed the hon. Gentleman had not had enough time to acquaint himself with these matters, but he hoped he would do so. If these examinations were going to be conducted by an Admiralty board and universities, then the Civil Service Commission Vote would have to be diminished. The Civil Service Commission had done its work well, and he had no desire to diminish the Vote, but he hoped the Government would insist on all examinations for the public service being conducted by that body as in former years.

*CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.) said he was sorry that he differed slightly from his hon. friend for the West Derby Division of Liverpool as to the remarks he made about the men and boy messengers, because he thought that in all these Departments which held examinations, it was absolutely necessary occasionally to employ temporary clerks or boy messengers at reasonable rates. Therefore he thought the hon. Member's objection was very easily disposed of when applied to a Department such as this, which was fitful in its operations, and was active or otherwise at different periods of the year, when there were or were not examinations being held. It seemed to him that the hon. Member's energy might have been directed to a much more serious and important point, and that was the fees which were charged in connection with the Civil Service examinations. The age in which we lived was one in which we were desirous of bringing into line the many classes who could not go to the various universities to be trained for particular examinations. But they had an estimate of extra receipts for fees of no less than £16,620. He would ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to take into consideration how those who were poor, so far as the pocket was concerned, were debarred by this means from entering the Civil Service. If the fees were reduced by one-half it would give much relief and satisfaction to the working classes, who, although they might be poor in pocket, were rich in brains. All they asked was that their sons should be given an opportunity, and that the Department might try and ascertain if they were suitable. Generally looking through the Estimate, although there might be an increase here or a decrease there, the whole thing turned upon this £16,620, and it was a question whether the Department would not be better served if there were introduced into the Civil Service men who would be drawn from the poorer class schools, which were producing boys perhaps better provided with qualifications for the work than boys who went to large schools or universities. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would give them some little hope that the poorer classes in pocket, although they might be rich in brains, should have a chance of being appointed to the higher grades of the Civil Service. He and his hon. friends would feel satisfied if the hon. Gentleman would give them some little hope that the fees would be reduced in order to enable the poorer class of labourers' sons and daughters to compete for these posts with offspring of the wealthier classes.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, S.) was sure the Committee would be very grateful to the hon. Member for bringing before it so sympathetically the claims of those who were now barred from an honourable career by the extraordinary exaction of £16,000 or £17,000 as fees for examinations. [A laugh.] The Financial Secretary laughed, but he would not laugh if he were the father of some of those poor boys with a future barred to them by class legislation of the very worst kind.

MR. McKENNA: Has the hon. Member ever heard of a single case of the kind which he is now stating?

MR. T. L. CORBETT replied that he did not see why he should be submitted to that kind of cross examination. It stood to reason that if they exacted enormous fees of the character summarised in the Estimates there would be many who had been unable to provide the fees. What struck him most forcibly in these Estimates was that this Government of economy and retrenchment was in every case considerably increasing the expenditure of the country. Gibes had been flung at the Tory Party in the past as the Party of extravagance. The best test was to take the two columns of the Estimates page by page and they would find the amounts repeatedly augmented. The Civil Service Commission was not directly under the control of any Department, and he thought it was due to the new Members of the House that some short sketch should be given by the Financial Secretary of the work which really came under the control of the Commission.

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the Clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further proceeding was postponed without Question put.

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL [BY ORDER.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."

*MR. MORTON said he desired to move the clause of which he had given notice.†

*MR. SPEAKER said that new clause would not be in order, but the hon. Member could raise such discussion as he desired upon the first Motion that stood in his name on the Paper.

*MR. MORTON said in that case he was inclined to move that the debate should be adjourned in order that he might have an opportunity of framing a clause that would be in order. He had no desire to destroy this Bill, and therefore he would move that its consideration should be adjourned.

*MR. SPEAKER said if he might advise the hon. Member he would respectfully advise him not to take that course, because he very much doubted whether any clause which the hon. Gentleman could frame would be in order. On the Second Reading he had ruled that the Instruction of which the hon. Member had given notice was not in order, and that being so it was impossible that the clause which the hon. Member desired to carry out that Instruction could be in order. Therefore, any clause which had that object in view would not be in order, but the hon. Member was entitled to raise a discussion on the point he desired to raise on the Motion that the Bill be considered this day six months.

*MR. MORTON said in that case he would take the advice of Mr. Speaker. He did not know whether anyone was present to answer for the Midland Railway Company, but he wished to know whether that Railway Company meant to do anything to meet the demands made by the third-class passengers for sleeping accommodation similar to that given to first-class passengers. The only answer he had obtained up to the present was that it would not pay. But every one knew that no first-class passenger traffic paid, and the company, therefore, paid the losses on the first-class passenger traffic out of the profits made on the third-class. It was not right to continue to take the money of the third-class passengers to pay the loss made on the sleeping accommodation given to the first-class without giving the third-class passengers the same facilities. Although he did not to-night wish to go the length of throwing out the Bill he warned the Midland and other railway companies that unless they dealt fairly with all classes of passengers that the time would come when the House would tell them that it was no use to come asking favours, unless they were prepared to deal fairly with all classes of passengers using their lines. He gladly admitted that the Midland was one of the most respectable railways in the United Kingdom, and he did not want to damage their interests. Therefore he would, as a matter of form only, move that this Bill be considered this day six months.

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† The Clause was as follows:—The Company shall, upon all their trains carrying first and third-class passengers upon which sleeping accommodation is provided, provide such accommodation for the use of third-class passengers.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central), in seconding the Motion, said that on the last occasion when this Bill was before the House he called attention to a series of matters affecting the city of Sheffield in regard to its railway connections. His right hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Epping Division of Essex on that occasion said, although he was not connected with the railway company in any way, that he was informed by the Midland Railway Company that the matters to which he (Sir Howard Vincent) had referred were engaging the earnest attention of the company. But he had received only this afternoon a letter from the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures, in reply to a letter he had sent, stating that they had heard nothing from the railway company, and there had been no change in the railway arrangements. It was a serious matter with which they were dealing, and concerned the comfort and convenience of a city of nearly 400,000 inhabitants. The suggestions which they made to the railway companies were not to increase the accommodation or the number of trains, but the people of Sheffield claimed that they were entitled to return tickets at reduced fares, and to week-end tickets in the same way as other towns which were further off. They also thought it would be advantageous if the return tickets and season tickets were made interchangeable and available on the three lines which ran into Sheffield. They had brought this matter before the Midland and other companies, but could get no further. They were unable to get any response from these three great companies, because it was not a question for the Midland Company alone. The propositions which they had made were of quite as much advantage to the railway companies as they were to the people of Sheffield. It was a matter of great importance to the commercial interests of Sheffield that they should have these passenger facilities connected with that great city. Because Sheffield could not get any answer in accordance with the assurance given to his hon. and gallant friend, who was not in any way to blame, because, on the last occasion, he had only given the answer he was asked to give, he was compelled for form's sake to second the Motion of the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said he had very little to add to what he said on the last occasion. When this Bill was before the House on the 20th of March last, the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire brought forward practically the same Motion as he had brought to-night, and the hon. Member for Central Sheffield made practically the same speech. He himself gave the answer he was instructed to give, and he confessed that he was disappointed that his hon. friend should have been able to reproach him to-night with his not having received an answer from the company. He hoped his hon. friend, after this debate, would receive an authentic answer from the company. He was very far from saying that the question raised by the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire was not an important one, but he maintained that a General Powers Bill of this sort was not the occasion on which to raise it. If the railway company could see their way to do anything without loss of income, they would so so. But this was a question of internal management, and unless the House was prepared to take away all the management of their affairs from the Company it was rather unfair to try and postpone a Bill of this kind by introducing a question which had nothing to do with it.

*MR. MORTON asked what occasion, if not this, should be taken for bringing this matter forward.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said it was not his business to give advice to hon. Members as to the proper occasion on which to raise questions. He merely said that this was not the proper occasion. After having been defeated on this question on previous occasions, was it fair to the railway company to raise it again?

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport) agreed that as a decision had been arrived at, the matter ought not to have been again raised, but he thought it his duty to say that the opinions he had been able to collect showed that there was a growing feeling in the House that something should be done to afford facilities in the direction named. The Midland Railway Company had been one of the most enterprising of the railway companies in affording facilities for third class traffic, but he thought if the right hon. and gallant Member for the Epping Division would convey to this company and other railway companies with which he had opportunities of contact the growing feeling in the House, it might serve a useful purpose.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said perhaps he might be allowed to interrupt to say that there were hon. Members who knew that he had already taken up this question with the railway companies.

*MR. KEARLEY said the Board of Trade had also taken the matter up, but probably an expression of opinion from the right hon. and gallant Member, such as he had indicated, might tend to secure progress in the direction required. He was sure the Board of Trade would assist in every way they could. Of course he could not arbitrarily dictate to the railway companies what they should do. He hoped the hon. Member would not press this matter to a division, but would allow the Bill to proceed, and rely upon the right hon. and gallant Member to represent to the railway companies the feeling that was growing in the House in favour of such accommodation.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Certainly.

*MR. KEARLEY: And we at the Board of Trade will do our best also.

*MR. WEIR said it was very kind of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to consent to make representations to the railway companies, and he should look for results. He had said that they could not interfere with the internal arrangements of the railway companies. He (Mr. Weir) should like to know why. This was a general powers Bill and was a most opportune time. A dozen years ago he raised the question of a purer atmosphere in the underground railways of London, and he had the satisfaction to-day of knowing that there was a better atmosphere in the tunnels. They ought to use every occasion in this House to get railway reforms. It was not fair that a week-end or return ticket could not be used at any station on the return journey if the holder did not wish to go back the whole way. He asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade to bring the matter to the notice of the railway companies. Surely an enterprising railway company like the Midland Railway Company could devise some means of accommodating the large and important body of commercial men by providing third class sleeping accommodation.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.) supported the Motion. At the same time he wished to associate himself with everything that had been said as to the indebtedness of the British public to the Midland Railway Company. He thought third class passengers owed every advantage they had received in recent years to the pioneering of the Midland Company. Therefore, if he was apparently supporting a vote of censure on the company, it was because that was the only method open to impress upon railway companies the desire for improvements in the direction referred to. The commercial travellers on this great system had long suffered a great privation which they should no longer suffer. Reference had been made to the fact that progress in this direction was comparatively easy, and he would point out that the railway company with which they were specially dealing had quite recently taken a step forward, which he thought would convince them of the desirability of granting this further concession. He referred to the sleeping accommodation for a nominal fee on the Midland Railway Company's steamers to Belfast. The opening of this service had brought about a remarkable improvement in the services of the other companies, and more especially in the service managed and controlled by the Board which the right hon. Member or the Epping Division of Essex represented in this House. They had long been under the dominion of the London and North Western Railway Companies, and they had never received a concession from that company which had not been dragged out of them by competition. He thought the public had a right to demand still more concessions from the London and North Western Railway Company.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order! order! We are now discussing the affairs of the Midland Railway Company.

MR. BARRIE said that the railway companies acted together in these matters, and it was only in that connection he was referring to the London and North Western Railway. Whenever the Midland Railway Company had full powers they granted these week-end concessions without any great pressure of public opinion being brought to bear upon them. Apparently the hon. Member opposite was not aware how much they were indebted to the Scotch railway companies in regard to these reforms. The position was, as regarded Edinburgh and Glasgow, that if they wanted to get down on Friday evenings to the great cities, first class passengers were offered special privileges while third class passengers received no such privileges. This was a monstrous injustice to the third class passenger, who contributed 88 per cent. of the returns of the company. Speaking with a considerable knowledge of railway matters on the other side of the Atlantic, he could assure the House that in America no railway company ever thought of charging more than 8s. for a comfortable sleeping berth upon a third class fare. It had been found profitable in America, and he urged this reform upon the railway companies of Great Britain, being fully persuaded that it would be in the best interests of the shareholders. At present there was no concession on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday to the poor unfortunate commercial traveller, who was charged full fare. Unless there happened to be a strong competition by water service no concession was made to third class passengers. He hoped the result of a free expression of opinion on this question would be that the railway companies would reconsider this matter.

MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said he had been communicated with by commercial travellers in the East of England, who stated how great a boon it would be if this third class sleeping accommodation was provided. He hoped this proposal would bring about the reform which these commercial travellers so very earnestly desired.

MR. R. J. PRICE said he had made it his business to inquire of the different railway companies as to the feasibility of carrying out this proposal, and the officials informed him that they had recommended this policy for the last thirty years. They had been asked why they were raising this point now. His reply was that this was the only way in which they could raise it. Railway companies had been granted a monopoly, and therefore Parliament had a right to some control in regard to the way in which they carried on their business. It was essential that nowadays they should give every facility to commercial men to carry on their business as quickly, easily and cheaply as possible. He was glad that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade had expressed an opinion in favour of this proposal.

*MR. MORTON said that after the sympathetic way in which the representative of the Board of Trade had spoken upon this question, and the promise of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, he was willing to withdraw his Amendment. He wished to state that he had made no attack whatever upon any particular railway company. It happened that the Midland Railway Company was the first that came to hand, and he expected his right hon. and gallant friend opposite to do something in this matter. He wished to intimate that he should have another shot upon this subject when the Great Northern Railway Bill came forward, and that the matter would not be allowed to drop.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £25,243, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the salaries and expenses of the Civil Service Commission."

MR. ASHLEY said there was one item put down as "other incidental expenses," which he did not think had been sufficiently considered. For the years 1905–6 this item amounted to £820, but this year it was £920, or an increase of £100. He thought they should have some explanation of the sums which appeared under that heading. It seemed to him to be like what happened in foreign countries when they were asked to vote sums for the Secret Service without knowing who received the money or for what service it was required. He hoped the Secretary of the Treasury would give them some intimation, and in order to get an explanation he begged formally to move a reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £25,143, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Ashley.*)

MR. MCKENNA said it was quite reasonable that the hon. Member opposite should ask this question. When they had a vast number of small expenses of this kind it was impossible to give a detailed account of them. He could, if necessary, give a detailed account of last year's items, but he could not give the items for this year. These examinations were held locally, and he should think the number of persons examined would total 10,000 in the course of the year. Therefore the hon. Member would see that in dealing with such a great mass it was impossible to give a detailed account of what the isolated expenditure was going to be in regard to these small items.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport) drew attention to the item for assistant examiners amounting to the enormous sum of £18,130. It appeared to him that these assistant Commissioners were paid in addition to what they received from other appointments up and down the country. When they were paying so large a sum for assistant examiners, that sum would provide permanent officials to do this work—men employed solely in the work and put in various centres. Probably a considerable saving might be achieved in that way.

MR. MCKENNA said the suggestion made appeared reasonable on the face of it, but he thought the hon. Member would agree with him, seeing that the examinations took place at different places and at different periods of the year, that it would be impossible to have a permanent staff. The examinations covered a vast number of subjects. They included every sort of examination from that which the Post Office sorter was required to pass up to the examinations for the Indian Civil Service. Consequently they had to draw on a large number of outside examiners. A permanent staff could not be employed the whole year, and it was believed that it was cheaper for the State to employ examiners from time to time to undertake the work of the particular examinations. The question of examination fees had been raised earlier in another quarter. He regretted that the hon. Member who raised the question was not in his place, for he wished to show that he was under a misapprehension on this matter. The examination fees varied from 1s. to £6, the latter fee being charged for entrance to the Indian Civil Service examination. There had been no occasion found to change the scale of fees in the last seventeen years. It would be inadvisable to reduce the remuneration of the sub-examiners, as it was necessary that the services of the most competent men should be retained.

*MR. MORTON said it was estimated this year that the receipts from fees would be £4,000 less than last year. In regard to the item of £750 for the salary of the assistant secretary, it was said that this salary would be reconsidered when a vacancy occurred. Was the salary to be increased or reduced? He wished also to know what were the hours of labour in this particular office. If the hon. Gentleman did not know, would he kindly take this as notice that the Question would be repeated on the Report stage?

MR. McKENNA said it was impossible to give any exact Answer as to the number of candidates who would come forward for admission to the various departments of the Civil Service. The Commissioners believed that there would not be as many applicants for examination this year as in past years, and that was why they had estimated that the receipts from fees would be less.

*MR. MORTON asked whether there was anything to account for the falling off in the number of applicants.

MR. McKENNA said the number of vacancies in the various departments varied from year to year. As to the salary which was to be reconsidered when a vacancy occurred, he should like to say that whenever they reconsidered a salary they endeavoured to reduce it. He would endeavour to ascertain what the office hours were, but he warned the hon. Member in advance that he might have considerable difficulty in finding out.

*MR. MORTON said there could surely be no difficulty in the master going into the office and insisting on seeing the attendance books. The Answer given by the hon. Gentleman was not quite good enough. It was not what he was sent here from Sutherlandshire to accept.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) asked whether the examinations for the Civil Service in Egypt came under the Civil Service Commissioners.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) said the Committee had just been informed that the fees for candidates were sometimes as high as £6. He wished to know whether it would not be possible to make a reduction in favour of the sons of officers who had lost their lives in the Indian Civil Service or in the Army. They all knew that the payment of £2 or £3 in such cases was a very serious matter.

MR. McKENNA said he was under the impression that the Egyptian examinations did not come under the Civil Service Commissioners. He did not think the fees for the Indian Civil Service examinations were excessive. It was a question whether the cost of the examinations should be borne by the country generally or by those who were to get the benefit of them. He was bound to say that he did not see any reason for altering the scale at this moment.

MR. WARDLE asked whether it was not possible to reduce the fees of the assistant examiners, seeing that it was estimated that the fees from candidates would be less. Surely it could not cost so much for the examinations this year as last, if there were to be fewer condidates.

MR. McKENNA said the fees for assistant examiners varied according to the nature of the work they did. These men had to be skilled examiners, and if their fees were reduced, probably they would not obtain such competent men. He did not think it would be wise to alter the scale of fees.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

5. £39,699, to complete the sum for Exchequer and Audit Department.

6. £5,589, to complete the sum for Friendly Societies Registry.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD said he noticed that there was a slight reduction in the sum for the employment of assistance and a new sum for the salary of an assistant registrar. He knew that the work of this Department was increasing year by year, and that with the present staff, it was almost impossible to cope with that increase. He presumed that the reduction in the cost of the clerical staff of the office was made up for by the appointment of the new assistant registrar.

Mr. McKENNA said that the allowance for the clerical staff was lower on account of the appointment of the new assistant registrar.

Vote agreed to.

7. £65, to complete the sum for the Mint, including the Coinage.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said he wished for more information under Sub-head K as to the withdrawal of silver coinage from circulation. Last year the amount of silver withdrawn from circulation was £40,000, and this year it was to be £60,000, or an increase of 50 per cent. The Committee were entitled to have some explanation of such a large increase.

Mr. McKENNA said that the only answer he could give was that old and worn silver coinage had to be withdrawn from year to year, and that the Department had to be guided by their skilled officers as to the amount of coinage withdrawn from circulation.

Vote agreed to.

8. £7,348, to complete the sum for National Debt Office.

9. £14,430, to complete the sum for Public Record Office.

Mr. ASHLEY said he wished to call attention to the salaries paid to the charwomen employed in the Public Record Office. This was really a very serious matter, for these charwomen only got 10s. per week, whereas the charwomen employed at all the other offices received 13s. and 14s. per week.

Mr. McKENNA said that these women were not employed the whole day, and the view of the Department was that 10s. was a fair wage for the work they had to do. A certain amount of freedom must be allowed in this regard to the heads of Departments, and he had never heard that the women had made any complaints.

*Mr. J. WARD said he thought 2s. a day and 1s. for a half day a very low wage indeed. It might be true that they could get plenty of women in London to do the work for that wage, and they were often compelled to accept such a wage without complaining. But it was not fair for a Government Department to ask them to accept such a low wage.

Mr. SLOAN hoped that the hon. Gentleman would pay special attention to this matter, and try if possible to increase the salary of these women. It was not right to say that because no direct complaint had been made there was no feeling about the matter.

Mr. McKENNA said that the charwomen were paid for only a part of the day's work, and they went from one place to another the whole day long, so that in the main they earned a very fair living indeed. There was no evidence whatever that these women were sweated or underpaid.

Mr. SLOAN wished to know whether the Financial Secretary would make inquiries and find out exactly what the wages of the charwomen were, and if he found them inadequate, would he make proper arrangements.

Mr. McKENNA: Certainly.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT said he had felt it his duty to point out the extravagance of the Government in many directions, but in regard to this item of expenditure he did not think they had been extravagant. The hon. Gentleman pointed out that charwomen who had ten shillings a week made no complaint and seemed to think that that was a satisfactory answer to the allegation that a small wage was paid. At the same time it must be admitted that ten shillings a week was a miserable wage to offer to any poor woman, and he was stirred that evening as he had not been stirred in the past, as his attention had not been called to this case. Passing from that item for the moment, he wanted to point out a most remarkable and significant pronouncement which appeared at the foot of the Paper dealing with this Vote. Speaking of messengers and porters the note said—

> "These men belong to the new class of the pensioner messengers and vacancies are filled from that class."

Did that note mean that this new class of pensioner messengers were paid less than the market value of their services because they were pensioners? He wanted the Financial Secretary to answer "yes" or "no" to this question. If that was not the meaning of the note, he did not know what its meaning was. This was a very important point, to which he should have thought the Labour Members below the gangway, who had been criticising the expenditure of the Department, would have called attention. It seemed to him a very serious matter indeed that men, because they were pensioners, should be put into a special new class of messengers with less salary than their services would command upon the market.

*MR. ASHLEY wished to know if the Financial Secretary could see his way next year, if the Government was in office, to put down in the schedule that the charwomen were paid 10s. for part of a week's work. If that were done a great deal of time would be saved.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he found, upon looking at the details of the Vote, that £3,750 was spent upon investigations of documents and so on at Rome, Venice, and Simancas. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman would tell them whether this work was approaching completion and for how many more years this £3,750 was to be spent. He knew where Rome was very well and also where Venice was, but perhaps the hon. Member would tell them where this other place, Simancas, was. He had no doubt that there were most important matters to be investigated at Simancas which warranted this country in paying £120 a year, but it would be desirable to know whether it was in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America, and whether, in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman, it was desirable to spend this sum of money.

MR. McKENNA said that Simancas was in Spain. The investigations as to calendars and historical documents were now being brought to an end, and he did not think they could last very much longer.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said the hon. Gentleman had not answered as to the special class of pensioners.

MR. McKENNA said the answer was as brief as the hon. Member could desire. It was "No."

*COLONEL LEGGE thought they ought to have some more information about this place in Spain. Spain was a very large country, and he really thought the Minister in charge of the Vote should be able to inform them where the place was more exactly. They were spending £120 a year for the investigation of documents and archives at Simancas and they wanted to know where the place was; what the investigations consisted of; who was investigating and who was translating the Report of the investigators. Ministers on the Treasury Bench were expected to come down armed with all sorts of remarkable knowledge.

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.) rose to a point of order, and asked if the Deputy-Chairman had not power to stop this vain repetition.

*COLONEL LEGGE said he was only informing new Members who did not know the ways of the House that Ministers in charge of Estimates came down armed with a marvellous amount of information which they were ready to give to any Member who wished to know anything.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN (Mr. CALDWELL, Lanarkshire, Mid.): I must ask the hon. Member to come a little closer to the subject. He is making general observations which have no reference to the Vote.

*COLONEL LEGGE said he desired to have further information about Simancas and the investigations of the documents and archives there.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said a good deal of the discussion which was going on was being carried on by his hon. friends above the gangway, many of whom were new to the proceedings of this House. He would point out to them that if they thought they were injuring or embarrassing the Government by raising these utterly trivial points, they were making a great mistake, because under the Supply rule all that the Government had got to do was to provide a certain number of days for Supply—twenty or twenty-three—and it made absolutely no difference to the Government whether the whole of the twenty or twenty-three days were occupied in the discussions upon one Vote or whether it was spread out over a number. Therefore he would respectfully suggest to the new Members above the gangway, who were raising these points which—he did not put it disrespectfully—by comparison were small points, that they were not hurting the Government, but destroying their own chance of raising serious discussions upon serious points upon other estimates. He would suggest that instead of occupying the House for a considerable time in discussing questions such as they had been listening to for some little time, it would be better if hon. Members would concentrate their criticisms upon the many important points which required serious consideration and examination.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said that hon. Members were very much indebted to the last speaker for the advice he had given them and which he was going to take. He would call attention to what he considered was a matter of great importance. He referred to the item dealing with calendars and historic documents and the preparation of indices, for which a sum of £500 was put down. He should like the Financial Secretary to explain to the House how any Government, whether it was an extravagant Government, such as the last Government was supposed to be, or an economical Government such as this was supposed to be, could possibly spend £500 on the preparation of indices of documents in the archives of Venice, Simancas and Rome. With regard to the amount of £500 for indexing he would be glad to know from the hon. Gentleman where these indices were to be found; what hon. Members were supposed to learn from them, and whether they applied only to the three items which appeared above them in the estimate or whether they applied to the four or five below as well.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham) asked whether the researches into the documentary evidence which were conducted by Mr. Froude at Simancas were being continued, and, secondly, whether any one had followed Mr. Brown, the great investigator, in his work at Venice. These, it should be remembered, were matters of great historic research and an answer ought to be given to these questions by some one on the Treasury Bench, in order that the Committee might know whether the money it voted was being properly spent.

MR. MCKENNA said the work at Venice was being continued by a very proper person. It had been conducted by Mr. Rawdon Brown, and was now being conducted by Mr. Horatio Brown. Mr. Froude was at Simancas. As to the indices, with regard to which a question had been asked by the hon. Member for South Antrim, they were indices to each volume and were a general indication of what each volume contained.

Vote agreed to.

10. £1,000 to complete the sum for Public Works Loan Commission.

*MR. MORTON asked whether this was not a Department which could be abolished altogether, and the little work they did transferred to the Local Government Board or some other Department. The Department cost altogether very nearly £18,000 a year, but he did not know that it was of much use now-a-days because loans were obtained by local authorities and others without the assistance of the Department. Those who had pledged themselves to reduce the bloated expenditure of the country had to remember that the only way in which that could be done was to show that there was a great deal of unnecessary expenditure which should not be allowed.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said this was one of those Votes which ought not to be passed without some criticism. They were asked to vote a sum of £11,700 for this particular Department, and they were entitled, therefore, to give their views upon the way it was conducted and as to whether it could not be conducted more economically. £7,860 had to be paid for salaries, in addition to which there were salaries for legal assistance amounting to £2,891. There was a solicitor at a salary of £1,200 with annual increments of £50, with a chief clerk at £400, and other allowances amounting to £1,000 had to be paid to the solicitor for salaries of clerks. In his opinion there was quite enough legal assistance in other Departments, some of which might be made available for any possible purposes for which the Public Works Loans Department might require it, and thus render unnecessary the maintenance of this expensive solicitors' Department. He agreed with the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire that this was one of those Departments the working of which should be closely inquired into to see whether a considerable economy could not be made. There was not sufficient work going on in the Department to warrant such an expenditure as was proposed under this Vote, and it appeared to him to be a reasonable thing to suggest that this was one of those smaller branches of administration which might with advantage be combined with another Department.

Mr. J. WARD called attention to the fact that the solicitor started at a salary of £1,200 and rose to £1,500, and his chief clerk commenced at a salary of £400 and rose to £700, his present salary being £506 per annum. Though these exorbitant salaries were being paid there was an allowance of £1,000 to the solicitor for clerical assistance, he supposed as a sort of Christmas-box, or something of the kind. It was an astonishing way of conducting business. If clerical assistance were required it was better that it should be paid for directly by the Department itself.

Captain CRAIG asked how it was that the salary of the chief clerk this year was £506.

Mr. McKENNA said it was because the appointment was not made at the begining of a year. The solicitor was appointed in 1900 by the late Government and had done his work very well. He did not suppose it was suggested by the hon. Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool that he should be deprived of his office.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Oh, no.

Mr. William Rutherford.

Mr. McKENNA: Did the hon. Gentleman suggest that his salary should be abolished?

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): No; he wants you to suggest more, as he was appointed by the Tories.

Mr. McKENNA said the official in question was appointed by the late Government, which the hon. Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool supported, and if he desired his discharge he should be glad if he would make a statement to that effect. With regard to the allowance of £1,000 for clerical assistance, he might state that it was only an estimated allowance which would be audited in the ordinary course by the Auditor and Comptroller-General, and, if in excess, the sum that remained would be returned to the Treasury. It depended on the amount of work to be done. In the course of last year £3,000,000 was issued by the Public Works Loans Commissioners, who were the sole judges of the security of the loans. They were not paid themselves, and the staff which they engaged was not at all in excess of the requirements.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD explained that his point was that the money issued by the Commissioners was borrowed by local authorities, and there was very little difficulty in ascertaining whether the authorities were entitled to borrow it. He should not think there was any legal point in reference to the work of the Department that one of the junior solicitors to the Treasury could not dispose of in a few minutes.

Mr. McKENNA: Does the hon. Gentleman suggest that the solicitor appointed by the late Government should now be discharged?

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said they were not discussing the conduct of the late Government. Had he been a Member of the House in 1900 he probably would have protested strongly against this expenditure. They were now dealing with the matter as they found it in 1906. He failed to see that there was anything in connection with the legal department of the Public Works' Loans Commissioners which necessitated big fees for a solicitor, £600 in rates for the office, messengers, office boys, and all the rest of the paraphernalia included in this Vote. This was a matter which, if the Financial Secretary of the Treasury would concentrate his great ability upon it, he would find would give him an opportunity for effecting a little economy. There was no economy whatever in these Votes. Where was the retrenchment and reform which had been so much talked about at the last election? When he ventured to suggest that this was a matter which should be looked into in order that money might be saved, he was asked by the hon. Member whether he desired the Government to discharge some official that the Tory Government had appointed. It was the duty of the Financial Secretary of the Treasury to consider whether he could not make the service efficient, and at the same time save money, instead of bandying words across the floor of the House. It would be better form on the part of the Government if, instead of scoffing when a reform was suggested, they would promise to bring their ability to bear upon the question of economy.

*MR. J. WARD said the principle of granting this £1,000 for clerical assistance to the solicitor was a vicious one from beginning to end, and he strongly objected to the principle of subletting the employment in any department. If it was necessary to spend £1,000 in this way, he thought that those clerks who were employed should be in the direct employment of the Department.

*MR. MORTON said he understood that this solicitor was only appointed last year.

MR. MCKENNA: In 1901.

*MR. MORTON said he agreed with his hon. friend that these clerks ought to be employed by the Government. [Cries of "Divide, divide."] He could assure his young friends from the country that they were only delaying things by making such a noise. This was a very important matter. The real function of this office had gone, and they might easily transfer to some other department what little business was left, and thus make a considerable saving.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH said that as the question of municipal trading was occupying public attention, he should like to know whether any change had been made, or was contemplated, in the rate of interest on loans advanced to local authoriiies.

MR. MCKENNA said that that matter was under the control of the Treasury, and it had been ruled that Treasury matters could not be discussed on this Vote. With regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for Stoke, he could only repeat that the clerical assistance referred to was an unknown quantity. He could assure the hon. Member that these persons were not sweated. They were not in the permanent employment of the Government, and no definite estimate could be made of the probable cost. Whatever was spent would be properly audited, and the conditions of employment were the same as those which applied to any other Government service. He did not think that any economy would be effected by abolishing this office. During the last year some £3,000,000 had been spent in small sums.

*MR. MORTON said that for London the County Council mainly managed this loan business. He knew that the local authorities in London preferred to go to the London County Council, because they got the work done more cheaply and at a lower rate of interest than by going to the Commissioners. Unpaid gentlemen very often were worth only what they got.

LORD TURNOUR said he understood that there was an increment here of £50. It was most unfortunate that the Committee should treat this subject in a spirit of levity. When his hon. friend the Member for Liverpool was speaking just now he was very much surprised to hear an hon. Gentleman below the gangway say. "Good God, here's another of them."

*MR. LEHMANN (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): The remark I made was "Oh, Lord, here's another of them."

LORD TURNOUR said inadequate answers had been given by the hon. Gentleman representing the Treasury in regard to some of the money which had been voted. He thought this was a matter on which the Committee should get an answer.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,210, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

*MR. MORTON said the total expenditure on the House of Lords was £42,000. He had always thought that was a great deal too much considering the work they did. He should like to move to reduce the expenditure by one half. Of what service was the House of Lords to the country? Very high salaries were paid to officials who did very little work. If they were going to economise he should think this was one of the items on which they could make a great saving without loss to the country in any way whatever. It was all very well to put friends into sinecure offices in the House of Lords, but the country could not afford that sort of thing. He did not know whether anybody was going to defend the House of Lords, but he hoped hon. Members who had pledged themselves to economy would help him to effect this reduction. He moved to reduce the Vote by £5,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £5,210, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Morton.*)

*MR. CLAUDE HAY said that there were a number of clerks and messengers who were paid partly by the House of Lords and partly by the House of Commons. He contended that it was *infra dig* that these clerks, who had onerous and difficult duties to discharge, should be asked to serve under conditions which were almost offensive. They were paid by odds and ends, and the total amount they received was not set forth in a straightforward manner. Let the Committee take the case of the senior clerk in the Office of the Examiner of Standing Orders. In one place they were told that he received £950 a year, and footnotes here and there described additional fees which he received; but why should they not be told that that clerk got in all £1,200 a year.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said he wished to ask, on a point of order, whether the hon. Member was not infringing the rule against frivolous repetitions by repeating again and again the same points of criticism?

THE CHAIRMAN said he thought that there had been a good deal of repetition during a portion of the afternoon and the evening, but if he had checked hon. Members for repetition it would have probably wasted more time than was incurred by the original offence.

*MR. CLAUDE HAY said he had again to make the remark that in the case of the other officer he had referred to it was not shown in the Estimates the actual amount of money he was paid. He trusted the Financial Secretary would endeavour to arrange that they should not have this avalanche of footnotes to the Votes put into their hands. It should be plainly stated to the Committee in regard to each individual servant of the Crown what his salary was and it should not set out that he had so much salary and so many pickings here and there. If the Financial Secretary could meet him in this matter he was satisfied that he would expedite the business of the Committee and not expose the Department of which he was the representative to the attacks to which it was exposed by the Votes being presented in a cumbersome and unbusinesslike manner.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said that a large section of the Committee were not satisfied with the rate of progress that was being made with the Estimates, but he would point out that there were eleven separate and distinct Votes set down for discussion, and that they were now on the ninth. He did not think that was bad work, and all the criticisms he had heard from the Opposition side of the House had been most reasonable from start to finish. He desired to amplify somewhat the remarks that had fallen from his hon. friend who had just sat down. He was quite certain that the Estimates, framed as they were, with these interminable footnotes and references to other Votes must be unintelligible to Members. He objected to the footnote to the Vote on page 75. The control of the Treasury over this Estimate was confined to items which did not relate to the personal remuneration of officers of the House of Lords. The general control was vested in a Select Committee of the House of Lords and this was appointed each session. In the face of that note one might almost ask what was the object of bringing this vote before the House of Commons at all. As far as he could see the Financial Secretary could not answer for that Select Committee, and so far as they knew there was no representative upon that Bench who was entitled or empowered to speak for that Select Committee. When the Financial Secretary came to reply he hoped he would throw some light upon this subject, and that he would not think that his remarks were prompted by any frivolous intentions. He knew that hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House who were in the last Parliament used to raise this question, and he was sure that anything they could do to make these Estimates more plain they ought to endeavour to do. The second item on page 76 dealt with the Sergeant-at arms in attendance upon the Lord Chancellor, and to it an asterisk was attached, and a foot-note appeared as follows—

> "This officer also receives emoluments as a lieutenant-colonel on the retired list."

He should like the Financial Secretary in his reply to let them know what was the object of that foot-note. Were they to understand that the emoluments which the sergeant-at arms of the House of Lords received as a retired lieutenant-colonel, was to be taken as part of his salary for the duties he performed in the House of Lords, or were they to understand that his salary for his duties in the House of Lords, of £1,000, was made specially low because he was at the same time receiving emoluments as retired pay? It must be one or the other of these two alternatives, otherwise the foot-note was superfluous; and if it was superfluous it ought not to be there. There was plenty of matter in the Votes without having superfluous foot-notes. Turning to page 78, hon. Members would find some items which were even more mystifying than those which had gone before. He came upon an item for the preparation of indices for the Select Committees, and others for the dusting of boxes in the library, which was charged at £60. He had not had the time to discover whether there was any item down for the payment of housemaids, but it was quite clear to him that the duty of dusting boxes in the House of Lords must necessarily fall upon the housemaids or the attendants of the Librarian. If that was the case the item of £60 was unnecessary. Two items lower down were also rather strange. One dealt with stamping and arranging Parliamentary documents, and was for £30. Was that £30 expended in manual labour or on purchasing the stamps? In reference to the whole of the Votes he submitted that the manner in which they were presented was complicated and archaic to a degree. Was it intended to give them an opportunity of discussing them in a sensible manner?

MR. McKENNA rose to a point of order and submitted that the hon. Member was not in order in discussing the form of the Estimate.

*THE CHAIRMAN did not understand that the hon. Member was discussing the form. He understood that he was discussing the items.

MR. McKENNA said the hon. Member was discussing the form.

*THE CHAIRMAN said it was not in order to criticise the form of the Estimates.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG submitted that it was competent for him to point out that the multiplication of the footnotes rendered it impossible for him to understand the Estimate.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Get on to the refreshment department. That is the next item.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG, on attempting to continue his remarks, was greeted with laughter and ironical cheers.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT rose to a point of order. He said it was impossible to hear what his hon. friend was saying owing to the constant interruptions from the other side of the House.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG submitted that the Estimates were confusing owing to the multiplicity of the footnotes, and were so complicated as to be absolutely incomprehensible to hon. Members. He thought the Financial Secretary of the Treasury would be doing a great public service if he endeavoured to simplify the Estimates another year.

Lord TURNOUR, who spoke amidst cries of "Divide," was understood to say he was much surprised at the hurry of hon. Gentlemen opposite to get through this Vote. They were voting a sum of £17,200, and having regard to the way in which hon. Members opposite had spoken of retrenchment during last year, it seemed to him particularly inappropriate that they should desire to hurry through this Vote. There were one or two items of great importance in it. There was, in particular, the item of £60 for dusting books in the library. The Committee could not be aware of the fact that there were already provided eleven housemaids for the House of Lords. Why was this item of £60 put down for dusting books in the library when there were already eleven housemaids, any one of whom could perform the work? Was the office of dusting books at £60 a year open to public competition, because if so he would like to be a candidate for the office. It seemed to him to be a very easy way of helping to earn one's living. He appealed to the Committee not to pass the Vote without thought.

Mr. Chiozza Money rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Lord TURNOUR said another question which he desired to ask had reference to the Admiralty assessors. Were the assessors referred to here the same as the assessors to whom they had been referring earlier in the evening? Then on page 79 of the Estimates there was an item of eleven housemaids for the House of Lords. He had no objection to the employment of those housemaids, but——

*Mr. J. WARD: On a point of order, is there no form of the House which we can employ to prevent such a farce as this continuing?

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

ALIENS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

HARBOUR, ETC., BILLS (KINGSTON-UPON-HULL CORPORATION BILL.)

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 26th April; *Mr. Lloyd-George*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 140.]

Adjourned at seven minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 27th April, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords]. To be read the third time upon Monday next.

Macclesfield and District Tramways Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

*New Mills Urban District Council Bill (King's Consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed.

Uxbridge Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; London Government Schemes (London and Penge, &c.) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Barnsley Main; Bedwellty Pits; Blackwood Pochir; Bloxwich; Broughton Moor; Caerphilly; Cradley; Dearne Valley; Denaby Main; Denby Grange; Dowlais; Ebbw Vale; Fryston; Grimthorpe; Hemsworth; Haigh Moor and Woolley Moor; Hazlehead; Hill and Cakemore; Hodroyd; Howden Clough; Lepton; Lofthouse; Lye; Micklefield; Mitchell's Main; Park Hill; Primrose Hill; Primrose Main; Navigation; Newmarket Silkstone; Ossett Roundwood; Outfield Pit; Rotherham (No. 2); Saville Pit; Seaton Moor Pit; Stanhope Silkstone; Taff and Cynon; Tredegar; Ty Trist (No. 2); Wharncliffe Silkstone; and Woolley Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Ossett, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Garden City, Letchworth, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Abergwili; Adstone (two); Ampney Crucis; Anerley (two); Ansford; Ardsley (two); Ash Priors; Ashton; Bacton on Lea; Barnsby; Barrington; Barton on Humber; Basingstoke; Batcombe; Bebington; Bedminster; Belsize Park; Bishop's Hull (two); Boothby Graffol; Borstal (two); Brackley; Brannston (two); Bredicot; Bromley; Brondesbury (two); Brockholes; Brookfield; Bucknell; Burleydam; Burnage (two); Cadeby with Osbeston; Cadham; Carlton le Moorland; Castleton (four); Cawthorne (two); Cheadle Hulme (two); Chester; Chipstable; Christchurch; Church Lawton; Cinderhill; Clerkenwell; Cockett; Congresbury; Cromhall; Crostwick; Crowcombe (two); Cudham; Cuxham (two); Dalton in Furness (two); Dodford; Down Ampney; Easington (two); East Bridgeford (two); East Farndon; East Finchley; East Quantockshead; East Tilbury; Egham; Egremont (two); Ellastone; Emley (two); Farnborough; Farthingstone (two); Felthorpe (two); Foulridge (two); Framingham Pigot; Furnham; Gravesend (two); Great Yarmouth; Grimsargh; Halifax (five); Hampstead (three); Happisburgh; Haynford; Highgate Rise; Hinchley; Horsham (two); Horsley; Honley; Hoxal; Huddersfield (two); Huish Champflower (two); Hyson Green; Jackfield; Kilburn; Kingston upon Hull; Knodishall; Leasingham; Leigh; Llancarfan; Landilo-Talybont (two); Llangain; London (six); Lyncombe; Maidford (two); Maidstone; Marden (two); Martham (two); Martley; Matson; Meltham Mills (two); Middleton (two); Milborne Port; Mossley (two); Muchelney (two); Nailsworth; Napton on the Hill; Naunton (two); Navenby (two); Neen Sollars with Milson (two); Nether Stowey (two); New Basford; North Collingham; North Finchley; North Hykeham (two) Northleach; Northleach and Eastington; Northwood; Nottingham; Old Basford; Old Cleeve (two); Old Radford; Old Thornham; Ormesby (two); Orton on

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

the Hill (two); Ovenden; Over Stowey; Oving with Pitchcott; Parkfield; Pauler's Pury; Penarth (two); Penge (two); Penmaen; Penzance (two); Penrhiwceiber; Phillack (two); Reynoldston (two); Rhossili (two); Rochdale (two); Rochester; Runham (two); Rusholme; St. Buryan; St. Fagan's (two); Salford; Shepscombe; Shipton under Wychwood; Sholing (two); Shrewsbury; Siddington (two); Sketty (two); Skirbeck; Southampton (two); South Crosland (two); South Hampstead (three); Stand (two); Stanton; Stockport; Stockton Heath (two); Stoke under Ham (two); Strood (two); Sunbury Common; Swansea (three); Thornes; Timberscombe (two); Wakefield; Walcot; Walthamstow; Wambrook; West Chinnock; Weston-super-Mare; Weybridge; Wheatley; Whitchurch (two); Wick Rissington; Wilshaw (two); Winterbourne; Wispington; Wolverton; Woodchester (two); Woolley (two); Wootton Courtney (two); and, Ystalyfera (two); to lie upon the Table.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Edinburgh; and Hambleton Hill; to lie upon the Table.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Petition from Bermondsey, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Bermondsey, against; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Hull, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (DISQUALIFICATION REMOVAL) BILL.

Petition from Bermondsey, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (HOURS OF POLL) BILL.

Petition from Bermondsey, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petition from Bath, for repeal; to lie upon the Table.

VOTING DISQUALIFICATION (POOR LAW) REMOVAL BILL.

Petition from Bermondsey, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE (UNITED KINGDOM, COLONIES, AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address March 27th; *Mr. Lehmann*]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Sleeping Sickness in Central Africa.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether special measures are being taken to guard against the spread of the sleeping sickness into British Central Africa Protectorate and North Eastern Rhodesia by the tsetse fly or by other agencies; and whether the effect of the game preserves at Chiromo has been considered in connection with this contingency.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) No apprehension has hitherto been expressed by the administration of the British Central Africa Protectorate or that of North Eastern Rhodesia as to the spread of sleeping sickness into those territories, nor has the Commissioner of British Central Africa Protectorate recommended the adoption of measures to guard against it. Complaints have been made in one quarter in the Protectorate that the Elephant Marsh game reserve at Chiromo harbours the tsetse fly, but the suggestion is denied by the Commissioner.

Fair Wages Clause.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether there are any Government contracts for granite or macadam with Messrs. Mowlem & Company, contractors, Westminster; and, if so, whether the Fair Wages Clause is in force in the granite quarries of the firm at Guernsey, from which the material is obtained.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. In the case of granite paving and macadam the Fair Wages Resolution is attached to the contract. In the case of granite macadam ordered for the roads in royal parks in and around London the Fair Wages Resolution has not hitherto been attached to the contract. Arrangements will, however, be made under which this will be done in future. The First Commissioner of Works is informed by Messrs. Mowlem that they pay the current rate of wages for the district in their quarries in Guernsey.

Salaries of Poor Law Officers.

MR. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): To ask the President of the Local Government Board what, if any, is the minimum wage of indoor and outdoor officers under the Poor Law; will he say whether there are outdoor officers in London working alternately seventy-three and a half hours and sixty-three hours per week who receive a salary of only 25s. per week, which wage is subject to a deduction under the Poor Law Act; after how many years can a man claim a pension, and how long must he serve before attaining the full amount; and will he personally inquire into this matter.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) There is no prescribed minimum wage for Poor Law officers. There are cases in which the salary of an officer who does not reside in the workhouse is as low as 25s. a week, but I cannot say what are the hours of service in such cases. An officer must serve ten years to be qualified for a pension under the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896, and in ordinary circumstances he must have had forty years' service in order to obtain the full amount of pension allowed by the Act. If my hon. friend brings to my notice any particular case of the kind to which he refers, and which appears to him to need investigation, I shall be happy to consider it.

Erection of Cottages by Cork Rural District Council.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when the Local Government Board will be in a position to issue a Provisional Order authorising the Cork Rural District Council to proceed with the scheme for the erection of labourers' cottages, concerning which scheme a Local Government Board inspector held an inquiry in October last.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) A Provisional Order authorising the rural district council to provide 231 additional cottages is being prepared by the Local Government Board, and will be issued as soon as practicable. The Board are at present awaiting the settlement by the council of certain cases in which sites can only be authorised upon the fulfilment of conditions communicated to them on March 7th.

Land Sub-Commissioners' Decisions in Roscrea.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the decisions of the Land Sub-Commissioners at their recent sitting at Roscrea the rents were raised in some instances, and in others increased and fixed beyond the rents as reduced by voluntary abatements allowed by the landlords; will he say who were the Land Sub Commissioners responsible for the rent-fixing in these cases; were these appointments temporary; on what basis did they fix the new rents; and have they been re-appointed by the Irish Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have no information as to the matters of fact alleged in the Question. The decisions referred to were judicial decisions of a Sub-Commission Court duly constituted under the Land Law Acts, whose duty is, after hearing the parties and having regard to the interests of the landlord and tenant respectively, to determine what is the fair rent. The decisions were pronounced in open court and the results communicated to the respective parties, either of whom if aggrieved can have the case re-heard by the Land Commission Court of Appeal.

Closure of Army Votes.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary of State for War what Army Votes were closured without discussion in 1903, 1904, and 1905, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The information is as follows:—1903, 3 Votes, viz., 11, 12, and Ordnance Factories. (A discussion arose on the Report of the resolution taking these Votes en bloc.) 1904, 13 Votes, viz., 2 to 8, 11, 12, 14 to 16, and Ordnance Factories. 1905, 14 Votes, viz., 2, 3, 4, 6 to 12, 15 to 16, and Ordnance Factories.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. John Tennant, Sir James Kitson, Mr. Wedgwood, Mr. Levy, Mr. Robert Balfour, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Gill, and Mr. Seddon.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Reckitt, The Lord-Advocate, and Mr. Hobhouse; and had appointed in substitution:—Mr. Chiozza Money, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Herbert Samuel, and Mr. Beauchamp.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury) said the Bill of which he desired to move the Second Reading was not in any sense a revolutionary measure. It was a Bill designed merely to extend and develop the policy which had been approved by both Parties for the housing of the working classes in the rural districts. This matter had been the concern of the legislature for a great many years. During the last fifty years thirty-five measures had been passed with the object of improving the condition of the rural population of the country in this regard. The last three Acts had been passed by the Unionist Party—the Act of 1890, which was a consolidating Act, an amending Act in 1900, and a further amending Act in 1903. The Act of 1890 was still the principal Act relating to the subject. It was a long Act consisting of several parts, but Part 3 was the part which related mainly to the question of housing in rural districts. The object of the Bill he now asked the House to read a second time was to repeal Part 3 of the Act of 1890 and to substitute for it provisions which the promoters believed would carry out the object of that portion of the Act of 1890 in a more expeditious, simple, and less expensive manner. The object of Part 3 of the Act of 1890 was to enable the local authority of the district to obtain land either by agreement or by compulsory purchase for the purpose of erecting upon it houses or cottages for the benefit of the workers in that part of the country. The evil which it was intended to remedy was well known and generally admitted. The dearth of cottages in many parts of the country, with the consequent overcrowding, disease, and immorality, and the exodus of the rural populations to the towns, were matters with which everybody who took an interest in this subject were familiar. In the report of the Labour Commission of 1894 there was a sentence in the Report of Mr. Little, the senior assistant commissioner to the Labour Commission, which put the case in a nutshell. He cited the late Mr. Little because he was an authority upon this subject whom every one recognised. In the course of his Report Mr. Little said—

> "It is impossible to read Reports of assistant Commissioners without the painful feeling that too commonly the agricultural labourer lives under conditions which are both physically and morally unwholesome and offensive. The least satisfactory of the circumstances affecting the

life of the labourers is the condition of the dwellings in which a considerable number of them are compelled to live."

Those words were written twelve years ago or more and it could not be said that any great improvement had taken place since. When the Act of 1900 was before the House the hon. Member for the Ilkeston Division stated, as a result of his inquiries into the condition of 4,179 cottages and 298 villages in England that 22½ per cent. were unfit for habitation; 47 per cent. showed insufficient accommodation for the people of the locality; in 27 per cent. the water supply was bad; in 75 per cent. there were only two bedrooms with six or seven persons in each, and that 66 per cent. were without fireplaces. That was in 1900. Since then Mr. Rider Haggard had published his illuminating and interesting work on rural life in England, and nobody could read the book without seeing that Mr. Rider Haggard had been struck by the same set of facts. They had only to read the very first chapter on Wiltshire to see that the people to whom Mr. Haggard spoke in Wiltshire complained of the lack of labour and attributed it to the dearth of cottages. They found the striking fact that the farmer picked out as being specially successful, Mr. Dibden, was a farmer who had twenty-two excellent cottages on his farm. He never lacked labourers and those labourers were, in the opinion of Mr. Rider Haggard, of a particularly thriving and virile character. He had himself been furnished by the courtesy of the Secretary of the Rural Housing Association with notes of the Reports of inspections which were at that time being made in the Erpingham district of Norfolk, and the Reports of the condition of the cottages in the villages there were something quite terrible to read. And that was a state of things which he was afraid was not uncommon in many parts of the country: a country which boasted of itself as the head of a great Empire, and claimed to have established such a high state of civilisation that it did not hesitate, when it thought other countries erred in this regard, to offer them advice in very frank terms. It was not unfair, therefore, to ask the House to look at home in this matter. The legislation passed by the Unionist Party, in its endeavour to remedy this state of things, was no doubt excellent legislation, but unfortunately, owing to reasons which probably could not be foreseen, it had proved to be almost inoperative. Mr. Gerald Balfour, who then occupied the position of the President of the Local Government Board, told the House in March last year that as a result of that legislation only thirty-two cottages had been built by local authorities in England and Wales, and that as fourteen of those cottages had been built in one county, the Act had been practically inoperative over the greater part of England. In the case of the Penshurst scheme, owing to the cumbrous machinery of the Act, the expense, the intervention of the numerous authorities brought in under the Act, and the lack of motive power where the authorities were slack, it took five years to carry out a scheme to build six cottages. Authorities were not only apathetic but unwilling to embark in schemes which under the present law might prove unremunerative. The promoters of this Bill wanted to make the Act more simple. Experience shewed that to avoid the danger of loss on building, loans must be procured for longer periods, and at easier rates. The promoters wanted to make it possible for rural councils to borrow money for the purposes of building cottages, for a maximum period of eighty years at a rate of interest of 2½ per cent.,

> "or such other rate as shall in the judgment of the Commissioners of the Treasury, be necessary in order to enable the loan to be made without loss to the Exchequer."

They did not blame rural district councils for not embarking on a scheme which in their opinion would result in a financial loss, and therefore they wanted to set up a state of things under which the rural district councils could build cottages without financial risk. They also wanted to make the labourer able to pay a higher rent for these cottages, and they proposed to do that in this way. Under former Acts the rural district council could only give with the cottage half an acre of garden of the annual value of £3. This Bill proposed to allow the rural district council not only to build the cottage, but to give three acres of land with it, at an annual value of £10. The result of that would be that the labourer who took the cottage would have a source of income in the land accommodation which would enable him to pay a higher rent. Everybody agreed that the system of small holdings was one to be aimed at, and by this Bill they had tried to combine the building of cottages with the giving of small holdings. This would not only enable the labourer to pay a higher rent, but would encourage domestic family life by keeping the sons at home to assist their parents instead of going to the towns, and to that extent it would revive rural life—a thing which all desired to do. They had also to deal with the case of an apathetic rural district council who were unwilling to build. In order to deal with that subject they had given power to any four householders in or near the area affected by the dearth of cottages to go themselves to the medical officer and call attention to the insufficient housing accommodation, and then to make a representation to the rural district council. The rural district council were given the further facility of adopting Part 3 of the Act of 1890 without the sanction of the county council, and having been stimulated in their action by the four householders he had mentioned they could go to the county council if they were obliged to acquire land compulsorily. The provisions of the Local Government Act of 1894 were adapted to this measure, and by the simplest method possible the county council had power to hold an inquiry and put into force the clause of the Lands Clauses Act and take the land compulsorily. There was also power given to the rural district council compulsorily to hire land. That was a new power, but it was given because they thought there were cases in which rural district councils would be willing to hire land as involving a less risk than purchasing it. It might be said that more motive power was required to see that the rural district council, when it adopted the Act, if it adopted it, carried it into execution, because it was quite possible that a rural district council, although stimulated by four householders, might refuse to adopt the Act or, having adopted it, refuse to carry it out. In order to meet that they had given the parish councils power to go to the Local Government Board and represent the case to them, leaving it to the Local Government Board upon receiving such representation either to compel, by means of a *mandamus*, the rural district council to carry out its duties, or if they thought it would not carry out its duty, to transfer the whole of its powers to the county council. It was not easy, therefore, to imagine a breakdown of the machinery of this Bill except in two cases—either that the Local Government Board having obtained a *mandamus*, the rural district council committed a contempt of Court or, what was more possible, that upon the transference of these powers to the county council the county council refused to act. There were some supplementary clauses also drafted to promote the main object of the Bill, which was to give facilities to the rural district councils to give better houses to the workers in the country. Any four householders or the parish council might call upon the district council to alter by-laws so as to provide against the unwholesomeness or insufficiency of existing houses and the Local Government Board were to frame model bylaws for such districts. Railway and tram companies were authorised under certain conditions, only to be modified by the rural district council, or the Local Government Board, to purchase or hire land for the purpose of erecting houses for the working classes. Powers were also given to universities and ecclesiastical corporations and charity trustees, with the consent of the Charity Commissioners, to sell their lands for the purpose of houses being erected on them for the working classes, or they might themselves erect such houses on their lands. Such were the main provisions of the Bill. It was a moderate and honest attempt to stimulate rural local authorities to face this serious problem of lack of housing accommodation for our workers. The Bill would make it easier for them to deal with the question by facilitating the acquisition of land for the purpose, and by minimising the risk to them of burdening the rates by so doing. It would give the individual householders the right to take the initiative in stirring up their councils. More than all, it would give a real opportunity for the creation of small holdings along with the cottages, by which it was hoped not only that the cottages would be remunerative property to the rural councils, but that the people of the country would be induced to remain in their own country homes and that those who had gone in despair to the less healthy towns might be drawn back. These were objects which were dear to every social reformer, and every lover of his country, without distinction of politics; and he would therefore appeal to hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House and of all shades of opinion to support the Bill. He did not doubt but that there were features in it which might be open to amendment or criticism. That was the case with every measure. But it would do something to ameliorate the miserable conditions under which so many of our countrymen had to spend their lives. It would do something to reduce the discomfort, the disease, and, he feared, the condition of immorality which must grow out of those conditions. It was sometimes said that our people in the country did not feel these things, because they did not agitate for or avail themselves of legal reforms; but he was convinced that that was a mistake. The truth was, they often could not assert their rights or even their wrongs without the risk of bringing upon themselves even worse evils than those they had to tolerate. They were, many of them, in such a condition of dependence upon their employers that to act in any way that was distasteful to those employers might lead to the loss of such poor homes as they had without the possibility of obtaining any other, except the workhouse. It was their helplessness, not their apathy, which kept them quiet, and that was all the more reason why the legislature should come to their aid, and he appealed to that great popular representative Assembly to see that that aid was not delayed a moment longer than was necessary.

*MR. WINFREY (Norfolk, S.W.) said that next to the problem of how to get the people back to the land was undoubtedly the problem of how to provide decent cottage homes for those who desired to stay in the rural districts and cultivate the soil. He was persuaded from a very close study of this question during the last twenty-five years that the rural depopulation, while in the main due to the divorcement of the labourer from the soil, was also due in no small degree to the shrinking of decent housing accommodation and the conditions under which the labourer had to live. Cottages had fallen into disrepair and decay, and not anything like an equal number had taken their place. Thirty-eight years ago, when he was a lad of ten, he walked a mile and a half every morning to the village school. Naturally every cottage on the wayside was a land-mark. To day he could point to at least eight sites where cottages stood and where families had been reared. The cottages were gone, the land upon which they stood and the gardens which had been theirs had been thrown into the adjoining fields, and only one new cottage had appeared in thirty-eight years in that mile and a half. That statement was true of scores of districts. When they asked why this was, they were told it did not pay the private landowner in the rural district to build cottages, although he thought the landowner too often forgot that it might improve the letting value of his land. But they had to face facts as they were. Up to the present, legislation on the subject had not been a success, and they were bound in the interests of country life, and indeed of the country generally, to make another attempt to assist the workers who desired to live by the cultivation of the soil. To show the House how great was this need he would like to take hon. Members in fancy to a hamlet in his constituency as an object lesson. But first of all he would say that as far as his experience went the need for better and more houses was often in those districts where the land was of good quality, like that in the neighbourhood of Spalding, where they had succeeded to a limited extent, at any rate, in getting allotments and small holdings for the labouring population. Such a hamlet was Nordelph, in the parish of Upwell, on the borders of Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. Ten years ago they discovered a land hunger there. First of all they got the acre allotments for almost every man in the hamlet. Then more land was asked for. Some five years ago he was able to purchase fifty acres of land in that hamlet at £40 an acre and he offered it in small holdings. He met the applicants in the village club-room, which was crowded to suffocation. Of course he was able to meet the demands only of a very few, but the result was that the attention of the county council was called to the matter and they purchased a farm of 120 acres in the hamlet, and this had now been in occupation for two years. But nothing had been done during that time by private enterprise or public authorities to supply better homes for the people in the hamlet. Last Saturday he spent the day inspecting the cottages there. A large drain, which drained the Fens, passed through the hamlet, and there was a bridge over the drain. He took the seventy cottages within a quarter of a mile of the bridge and found that only twelve of these cottages had five rooms, forty-three had four rooms of a sort, five had three rooms, and ten only two rooms, so that of the seventy cottages fifty-eight had less than five rooms. There were three empty cottages with two rooms each. He took what he thought were the ten worst cases and visited the cottages. The first occupier was a man who had some five acres of land and was living in a house of four rooms, two being bedrooms, one upstairs and the other downstairs. He was a widower with three sons, aged twenty-two, twenty, and fifteen, all at home helping their father on the land, and three daughters, aged eighteen, thirteen, and eleven. The father and the three boys occupied the bedroom upstairs, which was a fair-sized room over the two living rooms. The girls occupied a bedroom on the ground floor, 13 feet long, 7 feet wide, and 6 feet 3 inches high, with a cubic space of 569 feet. All three girls slept on a 4 feet 6 inches bedstead in this room. There were two daughters out at service, and when they came home for their holiday they had to sleep on a couch in the kitchen. This was a well-to-do family willing to pay a decent rent for a cottage. He believed the urban council bye-laws provided that all bedrooms should have a cubic space of 400 feet per person. In prisons 500 feet per person was provided, and in barracks 600 feet Yet here were three growing girls occupying a room of only 569 cubic feet space. He went on to another case—one of his tenants—who used to live in an old mill converted into a house, where he had lived 32 years, but the owner wanted it and the tenant had to seek another house. As he was a tenant of land he did not want to go into another village, and the only house he could find was one of two rooms, the sitting-room being 11 feet by 10 by 6 feet 3 inches, and the staircase leading to the single bedroom 1 foot 9 inches in width. The bedroom in which he and his wife slept was 12 feet 9 inches long, 11 feet wide, and 6 feet high. There was a window 2 feet square, and the cubic space of the room was 846 feet. The only pantry in the house was 36 inches wide and 16 inches deep, and he was not surprised, therefore, to see some loaves of bread under a chest of drawers. There was one privy to two houses. He went into other cases, all of which were very bad, and he regretted to say that two of the houses belonged to a county magistrate, who had been raised to the bench for services rendered. One was a four-roomed cottage with no garden. A family had resided here for thirteen years. There were four sons at home, aged twenty-one, eighteen, sixteen, and thirteen, and three daughters, aged ten, eight, and five. There were three married daughters away, and three children had died in infancy. The four sons occupied one room 12 feet by 7, and 6 feet high, the cubic space being 540 feet—not sufficient for one person. The three girls slept in the other bedroom with their father and mother, and there was no staircase to the room, which had to be entered by means of a ladder. The house next door was, he thought, the very worst case. It was the same size as the other house, and in it were ten people, including two sons aged fifteen and ten, five daughters aged twenty-two, nineteen, seven, six, and two and a-half, and an illegitimate baby of the eldest daughter which was one and a-half years old. There were two bedrooms, the larger being 12 feet by 12 by 6. He would show how the family schemed to sleep. They had two beds in the largest bedroom, and in the first the father and mother slept with their youngest child two and a-half years old. In the other bed in the same room the two boys of fifteen and ten and the girl of six slept. In the back bedroom the two girls aged twenty-two and nineteen, with the illegitimate baby slept. The occupant's wife, a very clean, respectable woman, told him that her husband and boys had plenty of work and earned good money, but they could not get another house in the parish, and if they went to another parish they feared they would not be so well provided. As to the sanitary arrangements of these two houses, it was true they had separate privies, but they were within five feet of the front door, and within ten feet of the front door of the houses opposite. There was an ashpit at the side of the privy and a soft water tank two feet from the ashpit. There was no cesspool to any of the cottages, and they had either to throw their slops into the street or into the drain at the back of the house. Whenever they exhausted the supply from the soft water tanks they had to drink the water from the drain. That was the state of things that was going on in his constituency at the present moment, and to show that it was not particular to the hamlet in question he should like to read an extract from the medical officer's recent Report for this rural district, as follows—

> "Nine cases of overcrowding have been dealt with. There still remains much to be done in this direction. Many houses, especially in the Fen district, are quite unfit for human habitation, but, as I have before pointed out, it is impossible at present to deal with any but the more glaring cases. Many of these houses are much too small, are badly lighted, damp, and have very imperfect roofs. Every year such houses necessarily become more dilapidated, especially when they belong to small owners as so many do."

In sending him this Report the medical officer said—

> "Overcrowding, especially, is in a great measure accountable for the immorality and illegitimacy so prevalent in rural districts."

So much for the demand for better houses. Why had past legislation been ineffectual? There were two chief causes. The first was the difficulty of obtaining land at a fair market price, and the second was the rate of interest asked by the Government for the money loaned, the period of repayment being so short there was a proper feeling on the part of local authorities that they would be wrong in putting on the ratepayers an increased burden at a time when they could not afford it. He knew that some would say, and perhaps with truth, that there had not been sufficient propelling force behind past legislation, and, further, that rural district councils were unsympathetic. That might be so to a limited extent, but it was not always so. He had known cases where local authorities had been ready to take action, but the difficulties he had mentioned were too much for them. There was a case in Lincolnshire a year or two ago in the parish of Donington, where the rural district council agreed to build cottages under the present Act of Parliament. The county council gave its sanction, and it was not until they came to deal with the landowners that the scheme fell through, as there was not a landowner in that agricultural parish who would sell land at less than £200 an acre, and then in no case would he sell the whole field. Donington was a parish he knew very well. It was rich in charity land, and he suggested that if this Bill went to Grand Committee the question should be carefully considered whether it would not be wise to extend the Allotment Extension Act of 1882 to the housing question, for if it were wise that workingmen should have charity land for allotment purposes it was also wise that they should build houses upon it. He would now come to one or two instances in which dear money had created a difficulty. A few days ago he wrote to the Clerk of the Rural District Council of East Elloe as to why they had failed to build cottages in the parish of Whaplode. The reply he had received was as follows—

> "The medical officer for the district reported that the cottages were overcrowded in the parish of Whaplode, and after considerable discussion it was decided to build four cottages in that parish as an experiment, the council being very much divided upon the point whether the cottages could be built to let at a reasonable rent, and pay their way. The council, however, decided that the expenses must be borne by the parish of Whaplode alone, and not by the whole of the district. An application was made to the Holland County Council for leave to adopt the Act, and to raise a loan to carry out the experiment. The Holland County Council thereupon referred the matter to the Whaplode Parish Council, informing that council that the building could not be done without great risk of loss to the parish. The parish council was, like the other council, divided in their opinion, but they decided to oppose the application of the district council, and so it came about that the Holland County Council never gave permission for the loan to be raised. It appears to me that if Parliament authorises a public body to carry out certain works, power ought to be given to borrow the money without reference to any other public body."

This came before the rural district council, and in order to show that farmers were not unsympathetic in regard to this question, he would like to read an extract from the speeches of two farmers who resided in that parish. One of them said—

> "Whenever new houses had been built there had been a rush of tenants for them, and for some new houses which had been put on the fruit farms the owners could have had three, or four, or five tenants for each, although they were in an out of the way place. If good houses were provided people would come and live there. There was a very short supply of

houses in the district; the day had gone by for the old order of farming, and now people went in more for market gardening, and consequently needed twice the labour they used to. He knew plenty of people who would have remained in Whaplode but for the want of houses, and they were losing their very best labour because of the absence of decent houses."

At the same meeting another farmer said—

"It would be a great advantage to the farmers because it would mean that they would be able to get a better class of workingmen."

He would now refer to the parish of Moulton, which had a population of 2,017, and an area of 12,000 acres. The clerk of that parish wrote—

"We had great need of decent cottages. The parish council are unanimously desirous of petitioning the district council to carry out the Act of 1890. This is a district council which has already adopted Part 3 of the Act. There are tenants in view, each of them willing to give £7 for a new cottage with three bedrooms, and a garden twenty poles in extent. There are some large farmers and potato growers who are ratepayers in the parish, supporting a scheme for building six cottages, if it could be done without appreciable charge on the rates. The land is in a good situation, and would be suitable if it could be had at a fair price. Upon the parish council ascertaining the rate of interest which would be charged on the loan (and which they knew would stop the rural district council from taking action) the parish council unanimously passed a Resolution declining to approach the district council, as it was impossible to build cottages which would pay their way upon money borrowed at 4¼ per cent. interest involving a rate of £4 17s. 6d. per £100 for fifty years, including the repayment of the capital sum. The Resolution they adopted proceeded: 'If a loan could be negotiated at 3 or 3¼ per cent. cottages might be built to pay their way. It would be useless to apply to the district council to put in force the Housing of the Working Classes Acts until the Lord's Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury granted easier terms for the loan of money for periods of forty or fifty years.' As to the need of houses, I have known of men earning 18s. per week unable to marry owing to lack of houses. In one case an applicant offered a furniture dealer who had cottage property a half year's rent in advance, and an order for furniture with cash down if he would provide him with a house. The farmers in village districts will not oppose a good Bill offering little risk of loss to the rates."

He asked the careful attention of the Government to that important feature of this Bill. The Treasury Minute of 1904 laid down that if money was borrowed for twenty years they had to pay 3½ per cent., for thirty years 3¾ per cent., for forty years 4 per cent., and for fifty years 4¼ per cent. That rate of interest was much too high. In Belgium the Government loaned to workmen's associated out of the funds of the National Savings Bank money at 3 per cent. to build houses. The funds of the National Savings Bank were used for housing purposes in this way. The Belgian Government had loaned to workmen's associations £2,500,000 sterling, *i.e.* 10 per cent. of the saving banks' funds, and they had not lost a single penny. If the Government of this country were to do the same they would at once place £16,000,000 at the disposal of town and country districts to deal with the housing problem, and he ventured to think that it would be the best-spent money that the House of Commons ever went in for. His hon. friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill had dealt very well will all the important features of the measure. It contained a very important provision that four householders should be able to put the machinery into motion. It was an extremely important provision that when they took land by compulsion they would not have to pay an extra 10 per cent. on the cost. That would enable them to get over a great many difficulties. There was a very valuable provision in Section 11 which provided that the parish committees should have power to build and afterwards to have the management of those houses. He thought it was a very valuable provision that they would be able to alter the building by-laws as provided under this Bill. With respect to the provision for lending money to others for building cottages, he thought they might very well add small holdings associations which were properly registered, and if they did he could assure them of a number of applications from such associations in his district. He trusted that the facts which he had placed before the House would assist hon. Members in coming to a decision to support the Second Reading of this measure, and he hoped that the Government would give them facilities for getting on with this work at the earliest possible moment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Mackarness.*)

MR. ABEL SMITH (Hertfordshire, Hertford) congratulated the mover and seconder of this Bill upon the very moderate tone which they had adopted. He agreed that the question of housing in the rural districts had a great deal to do with the state of things which they all deplored. Many bad cases of insufficient house accommodation had been mentioned, but he thought it would be generally admitted that in many parts of the country there had been a marked improvement in the provision of housing for the working classes during recent years. He knew of a late owner of property who had been a Member of this House and who during a period of forty years had built upwards of 80 cottages, which he ventured to say would compare favourably with any labourers' cottages in the country. At the present time he was the owner of those cottages, and he was carrying on the same policy as far as he was able. He knew there were in some districts a number of very bad cases. Even within thirty or thirty-five miles from the House of Commons he believed he could produce almost as bad cases as those which had been mentioned in the debate. The speeches which had been delivered by the mover and seconder only proved what a very complicated question this was, and what careful attention it required before the House proceeded to deal with it. The case in Norfolk to which reference had been made proved how powerless the district councils and local authorities were, owing either to their fault or to their misfortune, to deal with very bad cases. If it were possible to deal with the cases in those districts, the county councils concerned already had some power under the present law, and he thought they ought to have taken some steps to bring about a better state of affairs. Perhaps he might claim some authority to make a few remarks on this question, because he had had practical experience from two points of view, viz., as an owner of cottages in rural districts, and as a member and chairman of a rural district council, which position he had occupied for several years. Nobody who had had such experience could deny that the housing problem was one of the most important questions with which Parliament had to deal. He thought they ought to remember that, however bad the condition of affairs with regard to housing might be in certain rural districts, still even in places which hon. Members had mentioned they were really nothing like so bad as the conditions under which the population lived in some parts of our great urban districts. The cases of overcrowding which had been mentioned, however detrimental they might be, as he knew they were, to the health and the morality of the people, were nothing like so bad as the cases of which they had read, and which, unfortunately, were so common in all our great centres of population. He did not think that was any reason at all why the House should not deal in a practical way with the bad state of housing which undoubtedly existed in some of the rural districts. He was sure the promoters would admit that this was a very long and complicated measure. Clause 7 occupied nearly three pages of the Bill. Although he had very great sympathy with the object of the promoters, he was not prepared to say that he fully agreed with all the provisions of the measure. The procedure which this Bill proposed to substitute for that of the Act of 1890 was fairly long and complicated, and would require a great deal of consideration before they could properly decide whether it was the best way of dealing with the question. The hon. Member who seconded the Motion had referred to the difficulty which would arise if a county council when appealed to should refuse to act, and he had admitted that in such a case affairs would come to a deadlock. That was a point which ought to be very carefully considered by any Committee to which the Bill might be referred. It would be generally agreed, in view of the cases which had been mentioned showing the housing conditions in some parts of the country, that an amendment of the law was necessary. They must also know that a great deal more could be done if rural district councils would enforce the present law more vigorously than they did at present. But it should be remembered that these local authorities were not very strong bodies either financially or otherwise, and that in a great many cases it was almost impossible for them to put Clause 3 of the Housing of the Working Class Act into force without the prospect of imposing a heavy burden upon the ratepayers of the district. Where that was the case it could hardly be expected that a local authority would be very urgent in putting that part of the Act in force. A great deal had been done under another part of the Act of 1890 by rural district councils in improving the condition of cottages in their districts. He was connected with a council which, in a great many cases, had served notices on the owners of insanitary cottages, and, after a little difficulty and delay perhaps, they had been able to force the owners to put the cottages in proper repair. In some cases the cottages had been practically rebuilt and reroofed, and made fairly satisfactory. As to the proposal in the Bill to allow rural district councils to attach as much as three acres of land to each cottage, he was entirely in favour of increasing the number of small holdings, but he very much doubted whether this was the proper way of doing it. He had made some attempts himself in that direction, and had received very little encouragement from the men themselves. He found there was very little desire on the part of the labourers to have more land than they had at present. His experience was that, where a man had a good large garden, and perhaps an allotment as well, he had as much land as he cared about having. He knew there was a strong feeling in favour of small holdings where special conditions prevailed, and where fruit-growing and industries of that sort could be profitably carried on. He thought that if rural district councils were to try, while improving housing accommodation, to provide small holdings as well, their action would be rather impeded. In his opinion the councils would be wiser to confine themselves, in the first instance, at any rate, to the providing of better house accommodation where it was very bad. A great obstacle in this matter had been the difficulty of providing anything like decent houses at rents which ordinary working men could pay. It was very important in dealing with this matter to remember that in the greater part of the country cottages were not let at economic rents. He believed the custom was increasing of providing a man with a house as part of his wages, and not asking him to pay rent at all. In the immense majority of cases, he believed that the ordinary working man in the rural districts paid something between £3 and £5 a year for his cottage. However cheaply, according to modern ideas, these cottages might be built, it was almost impossible for a local authority to build and let them at that rate without imposing a considerable burden on the ratepayers of the district. It would be absolutely useless for a rural district council to provide cottages to be let at rents considerably higher than £5 a year in order to make ends meet. He thought the real principle involved in this matter was that they ought to regard proper cottage accommodation as part of the equipment of any property or estate. It ought to be recognised as the primary duty of the man who received rent to provide proper accommodation for the labourers who worked on the land. It was absolutely necessary, before the rural district councils entered upon any building operations under the Act of 1890, or any amending Act passed in the future, that they should have more power than they had at present to make representations, and to bring pressure to bear upon landowners, large or small, to provide proper cottage accommodation for those who worked on their land. Difficulty arose when a man owning an estate, large or small, was absolutely unable, owing to his financial position, to build new cottages, and to provide proper accommodation for his labourers. In those cases he thought the rural district council or some local authority should have such powers as were proposed in this Bill. He had no intention of opposing the Second Reading of the measure, because he thought a case for it had been made out. He suggested that the Bill after Second Reading should be referred to a Select Committee, in order that the complicated matters involved, and especially the financial question, might be carefully considered. It was impossible at the present period of the session to hope that the measure would become law this year, but if it were examined by a Select Committee, the measure might be brought forward in another year in a form which would be generally accepted by both sides of the House, and which would have the effect of improving housing in the rural districts throughout the country.

*Mr. BRODIE (Surrey, Reigate) said it was with real regret that he relinquished his membership of the rapidly diminishing band of new Members who had not yet addressed the House. He felt somewhat of a deserter in descending into the silver stream of speech, but he comforted himself with the reflection that in decreasing their numbers he added to the distinction of his late companions on the sublime heights of golden silence. At the same time he felt constrained to claim the indulgence which the House had so generously accorded to many new Members in order to address it on a subject which he had most deeply at heart. He believed that he had the sympathy of the great majority of hon. Members in giving a general support to this Bill. There were, however, some points of detail which seemed to be open to criticism, and if certain Amendments were accepted in Committee he had no doubt that they would render the measure more efficient, while it would still meet with the approval of the great majority of the Members of the House. It seemed to him that as regards initial stages the alterations in procedure were altogether to the good. They had the advantage of either householders or the parish council being empowered to act. If the rural council accepted such suggestions, and decided to put their powers into force, and if they obtained the necessary land and the necessary loan, all would apparently go as merrily as a marriage bell; but when it came to the question of obtaining land compulsorily where land was not otherwise obtainable, he had to confess that the Bill was complicated in its arrangements. He referred to the section by which, when powers of compulsion were needed, the rural district council was obliged to appeal to the county council to put in force these compulsory powers, with an appeal to the Local Government Board. There was no reason why the rural district council should not have a right to go at once to the Local Government Board. The same argument applied to Section 8 in connection with the compulsory hiring of lands. Why was it necessary to introduce the county council at all? The hon. Member for Hertford had some doubts in his mind as to the use of three acres of land for housing purposes, saying they were insufficient for small holdings. But these three acres of land referred to had nothing to do with small holdings. There were many rural districts and parishes where it might be desirable to provide three acres of land with the cottages, and where this could be done on reasonable terms what objection could there be to the rural district council having the right to do it? Then the hon. Gentleman opposite was very anxious about the burden which was to be placed on the rates by this measure. But he would point out that under Clause 12 of the Bill the district council had the power to let or lease the land which it had acquired. That was a very valuable provision, for it enabled the district council to inaugurate a scheme for house-building in connection with or in conjunction with local builders, building societies, and those persons who could not obtain land compulsorily, with a minimum of contingent risk to the ratepayer. Then Section 19 seemed to remove all objections which might be made to it by landowners. The poor landowner would now have such facilities for building through his opportunity of obtaining loans, that it would not be necessary for the district councils to take action at all. As to Part II., which dealt with appeals in default, he considered that this was the really weak spot in the Bill. Surely the machinery in regard to appeals in default should be much simpler than that which was foreshadowed. The Bill did not sufficiently facilitate action. When a rural district council failed to take action upon a request duly made, the parish council could appeal to the Local Government Board, which then made an inquiry, and might, if satisfied that a case for action existed, either act by *mandamus* or hand over the rights of the rural district council to the county council. He had no animus against the county councils, but they were already fully occupied, and to bring them in in a case of this sort was quite unnecessary. It would apparently be possible for the county council to do nothing, and there would be no further appeal. It was necessary that the housing question should be dealt with in country districts at once and practically. The question was just as acute in those districts as it was in the towns. Little had been done under the Act of 1890, owing to the complication of the procedure. He hoped the Bill would be referred to a Committee, so that its provisions might be threshed out and might form the basis of legislation, if not this year, at any rate next year. A measure of this character constituted an important part of the devolutionary legislation which was the greatest boon that that House could confer on the country.

MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead) said he wished to support this Bill. He heartily approved of the efforts of those who had brought it in and of those who desired to improve the housing of the people in the rural districts. He desired, however, to make one criticism, and he understood from the promoters that they were not unwilling in Committee practically to meet his objection. The Bill gave power to tramway and railway companies to take advantage of the measure. He did not desire to cast any reflection on tramway or railway companies, or to suggest that they would abuse the power, but he thought it was undesirable that huge corporations of this sort should be privileged to borrow money cheaply, to some extent at any rate, at the expense of the public as a whole in order to house their employees. There were economic objections to that. He saw no reason why wealthy corporations should have the aid of the House to borrow money at something below the market rate. But that was not the strongest objection. His strongest objection was a social one. He thought it undesirable that huge corporations of this sort, who occasionally had disputes with their employees, should have it in their power to turn their employees out of their houses. It was quite natural that in such a warfare these corporations should take advantage of the opportunity, but he suggested that the House should not deliberately take steps to strengthen the power of one side in a struggle of that sort by enabling them to borrow money for the erection of houses for their employees. He believed the promoters were not unwilling to meet him on that point, and he had very little doubt they would get over the difficulty. With regard to the main question he felt that a satisfactory Small Holdings Act and a satisfactory Rural Housing Act were two of the most important Acts that the House could pass for the benefit of the agricultural districts of the country, and the more they could perfect such Acts the further they would get towards solving the double problem of retaining a larger proportion of the population in the rural districts and of giving that population chances which were of vital importance from the point of view of character and stamina, not only of healthier physical conditions but of economic independence, which was nearly as important. No individual could be independent so long as he was economically dependent on other persons. That was one of the grounds of his opposition to this clause. The Bill made it possible to provide healthy housing accommodation for the agricultural labourers independently of the landlords or farmers who employed them. With regard to the economic aspect, he thought that it was quite possible, with two satisfactory Acts of the kind he had indicated, to prove that money could be invested in the enterprise of supplying houses for the rural districts, if that housing was combined with satisfactory arrangements for the provision of small holdings. It was possible to show that that could be done on a sound business basis, and it was important they should not extend philanthropic aid too far in this direction, otherwise they were bound to be limited in their operations. He believed that with the facilities that the Bill would give to industrial and provident societies to make experiments in this direction, in the course of a few years they would be able to show more small holdings and healthier housing accommodation for workers connected with villages, and he believed it would be possible to achieve that end without placing any financial burden upon the public. He held that this was one of the healthy ways in which they could solve a number of social problems. Some proposals which had been put before the House were mere plasters for the sore, and did not get at the root problem in such a healthy way as to set at work influences which would inevitably and automatically solve the difficulty. This kind of proposal put within the reach of the workman himself the means of working out his own redemption. He hoped that the Bill would go through with the hearty support of every Member, and that it would be amended in Committee in the way he had suggested. Properly amended, he believed that no better Bill would have gone through the House, and that they would have done a great deal to improve the economic position of the workers. Large numbers had left the country and come to London, because there had been no hope of their being able to say they possessed themselves or that they were able to think and work out their own lives according to their innate powers. It was because he believed the Bill would inspire such a hope that he heartily supported the Second Reading.

*MR. SILCOCK (Somersetshire, Wells) also desired to support the Second Reading of the Bill. He had, he said, had practical experience of the working of the existing Acts in an urban area and was also acquainted with the difficulty which existed in rural districts as to the application of the Acts. As chairman of a housing committee, he had seen the effects of clearing a slum district. He had seen how the habits of the people who formerly lived in an overcrowded area changed, and the work had been most beneficial upon the habits and the health of the people. He remembered seeing a chart prepared by the medical officer of health as to the state of a district before and after a scheme had been carried out. Before the scheme was carried out the chart was covered with black spots, indicating cases of consumption, but that same chart, after the clearance had been effected and the new dwellings built, showed very few black spots, proving that the disease had been almost stamped out of the area by building proper houses for the people. Suggestions had been made by hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House that overcrowding was not as bad in the rural districts as in the urban districts, but if hon. Members would only examine the figures given at the last census in regard to rural districts, they would find that rural overcrowding was a very serious matter. He knew that in one rural district, in the constituency which he had the honour to represent there were 227 cottages of only two rooms, and in those cottages two of the families numbered seven; in six cases the family numbered six; in eight, five, and in twelve four. These figures showed that there was certainly overcrowding. Taking the figures from the same district in regard to three-roomed cottages, of which there were 367, he found that in one of these at the time of the census there was a family of twelve—obviously a case of overcrowding of a very serious nature. In four of those cottages were families of ten; in two, families of nine, and in three families of eight. Thus he found that in one rural district there were between 600 and 700 people living under conditions which might properly be described as overcrowded. He supported the Bill because it did something to stimulate the action of local authorities. We had had Housing Acts in existence for some time, and mention had already been made of the fact that they had not been taken advantage of. All who had had experience knew that it was difficult to induce local authorities to take action under the existing Acts, but the provision made by this Bill under which four ratepayers might appeal to the Local Government Board would be a very valuable one in case the authority was not disposed to move in the matter. He thought it would be found that one reason why authorities had been slow to move in this matter was that they feared that it would involve a very heavy charge upon the rates, and authorities were slow to inflict any additional charge of that character. This was undoubtedly so under the existing Acts, and under a scheme of which he himself had experience, it had been found impossible to build without a charge upon the rates, because they were not permitted to have a loan for what they regarded, and he believed the House now regarded, as a reasonable period. If the loan could be extended over something like sixty years, then the authority would have a much better chance of building without making a heavy charge upon the rates of the district. There was another clause in the Bill which would be of great benefit to small authorities. That was Clause 12, under which permission would be given to a local authority to acquire land, and then to lease it to builders, or companies, or societies who might be willing to erect houses. Under that clause the authority would not incur any very serious financial responsibility, for they simply acquired the land, and, in many cases, there were individuals, companies, or societies who would be willing to build, if only it was possible for them to acquire land. The Bill would meet such cases. The Bill would also meet the financial difficulty in another way. Although it might not be possible to erect a cottage and let it at such a rent as would repay the interest, still, if there was a fair area of land allotted to the cottage, the cottage and the land together might be let at such a rent that the authority need not lose money upon the whole transaction. If the Bill was carried through and this was allowed to be done it would induce many local authorities to take the matter up. There was another valuable clause in the Bill, and that was the one giving power to the Local Government Board to alter by-laws affecting these workmen's houses. Members of local authorities had found that even the Local Government Board was not always disposed to alter these by-laws, and, speaking from personal experience, he had found that the cost of housing was materially increased by the conditions laid down by the Local Government Board—conditions which did not always appear to be necessary. All who had had experience in these housing schemes would agree that one very good effect was that when better houses were erected in a district the whole standard of building in a district was raised. He supported the Second Reading.

MR. LYELL (Dorsetshire, E.) said he desired cordially to support the Second Reading of this Bill, because he thought that if passed it would do a great deal of good. He believed it was far more a Small Holdings Bill than a Housing of the Working Classes Bill, and therefore would create a condition of things that many desired to see. If a man had three acres, and the temptation was to give him as much as possible, he could work that piece of land in his spare time. The proper cultivation of three acres of land would occupy the greater portion of a man's time, and he would become, what many wished to see, a small holder first, and a labourer afterwards. This Bill, in his opinion, did not solve the problem of housing at all. That question would not be solved until it was tackled from an economic point of view. The question of housing was determined by two factors—the cost of building a house and the rent that could be paid for it. The rents in rural districts, as they all knew, were extremely low, and as the hon. Member for Hertford had pointed out, in some cases the house was given as part of the wages. That, in his opinion, was a thoroughly vicious system. He understood that the hon. Member proposed to encourage that system still further, but he ventured to differ absolutely from him. He believed it ought to be got rid of. It had a strong taint of truck about it, and until that system was got rid of and the wages of the labourers were raised to such an extent that they could pay an economic rent this problem of housing would not be solved. Let them fix the economic rent on the basis of the cost of the house, and when that was done compel the labourer to pay that rent, and compel his master to pay him such wages as would enable him to do so. At the present time the question was approached from the wrong point of view, namely, that the labourer could not pay a proper rent because his wages were too low. From that point of view he could not see that this Bill was going to solve the problem of housing the labourers in the rural districts, but he welcomed it, because he thought it went a long way to solve the problem of the provision of small holdings.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said there were many hon. Members on both sides of the House who would welcome this Bill because, as one hon. Member had said, it was a real remedy and not a mere plaster, as most so-called remedies were. As had been said, it was a matter of vital importance to better the condition of our country population. It was increasingly hard, as every Member for a county division knew, to keep the country population from the temptations and excitement of town life. If the pure and simple life of the country, by which alone the physique of our people could be preserved, was to be brought back, it could only be done by improving the conditions of life in the country. The old argument of leaving this housing question to private enterprise was now happily seldom advanced. Private enterprise might act in the housing of the large populations of towns, but it failed entirely in the country, and there was nowhere where it had failed more utterly than in Ireland. The Bill did not apply to Ireland, but he hoped some assurance would be given by the Government in their reply that similar legislation would be extended to Ireland, where it was needed by the labourers even more acutely than in England and Scotland. If he could get some promise from the Government that legislation of this character, too long delayed, would be promoted for the benefit of Ireland, he would most earnestly support this Bill and all similar legislation.

*MR. W. H. LEVER (Cheshire, Wirral) said all were agreed that there was no question so interesting at the present moment as this question of the housing of the working classes. But while in great sympathy with this measure he would like to inquire whether if the thirty-three Bills passed in the last fifty years had produced no result, was it certain that this Bill would carry things much further? The building by-laws which Parliament had imposed had restricted building operations, for many of the by-laws, while necessary for congested districts, were not applicable to rural districts, and he suggested there should be some relief given to rural districts in that respect. The Bill would enable rural district councils themselves to build houses, and it was proposed that money should be borrowed at 2½ per cent., if approved of by the Local Government Board, notwithstanding that it was admitted that that was a rate of interest at which the Government themselves could not borrow. That was to say, that the money should be lent at a loss. The immediate effect of housebuilding by local authorities under those conditions would be that the houses so built would enter into direct competition with those built by building societies and private builders.

*MR. MACKARNESS said that if the hon. Member read the section of the Bill he would find that loss by the Government was provided against.

*MR. W. H. LEVER said if 2½ per cent. was approved by the Local Government Board the money would be provided at that rate. If it was not the intention to advance the money at a rate of interest of which the Local Government Board approved he failed to see the object of introducing the figure.

*MR. MACKARNESS: The words of the section are—

"Any loan by the Public Works Loan Commissioners for the purposes aforesaid shall bear interest at the rate of 2½ per centum per annum, or such other rate as may, in the judgment of the Commissioners of the Treasury, be necessary in order to enable the loan to be made without loss to the Exchequer."

*MR. W. H. LEVER said that in that case it was a little misleading to put in any figure at all. It had certainly misled him and no doubt it had misled others as well. But whatever the rate of borrowing might be, the local authority would enter into direct competition with individual builders and societies and would be doing something which would distinctly discourage the building of houses by those builders and building societies, because those societies would feel that they were competing against their own local authority, and if in that competition they were successful the effect would be that they themselves would have to share in the loss that would fall upon the rates. Another aspect had been referred to by the hon. Member for Birkenhead, and that was that if employers in any district could throw the burden of providing houses for their people on the local authority it would be to their advantage; but he did not think that a local authority should make such a provision to satisfy a demand, and in rural districts the landowner should provide for housing as part of the equipment of his land. He believed the remedy for this state of things was much easier than people thought. The housing question must be dealt with. They could not go on allowing the people to live in the way in which they were living at the present time on the land. It destroyed health and increased the death rate, and we should not retain our position as a great nation unless that condition of things was remedied. The great difficulty in the housing problem both in town and country was the land question. The small builder found the greatest difficulty in getting a small quantity of land. He might buy wholesale, but that was beyond the means of his capital and the needs of the district, and the acquisition of land for two or three cottages was surrounded with difficulties; the freeholder was not disposed to cut off a small piece of his property from his estate in order that two or three cottages might be built, and fees and costs were out of all proportion to the builder's requirements. Then, again, land might only be worth £50 an acre, as agricultural land, but if a small portion of that land was required to build cottages upon, it became immediately worth £20 a year in the shape of ground rents. If, however, the Bill were so amended in Committee that a local authority should have increased facilities for acquiring land and leasing it in small quantities to suit the requirements of builders, that would go a long way towards removing difficulties. Powers might be given to advance money on mortgage at a low rate of interest, and the money advanced, taking the form of ground-rent, would encourage building and there would not be competition with individual builders or holding up of land for speculative purposes. A man in a village having saved £50, and desiring to build himself a house, might go to his district or parish council, get a strip of land upon which he proposed to put up a cottage at a cost of £200. He would be able to get an advance of, say, half the cost of building his cottage and to raise by mortgage in the ordinary way a further amount. The building of such a house in the district by the man himself would stimulate the building of houses on a sound basis, and it was in the reach of all. Such a system would have this increased advantage over the system of building by the local authorities, that whereas, if the local authority built the houses themselves and the houses became vacant no rents would be received for them, and a sinking fund had to be provided to pay for the cost of building them ; in the other case they would be in the position that without finding money for the building they would have increased the rateable value of the district. These cottages with their one acre of ground would probably be rated at £10 per annum each, and the local authority would have people in them able to pay the rates. So that the rates on those cottages would be a great source of revenue to the district. While supporting the Second Reading of the Bill, he hoped that in Committee close investigation would be given to the policy of giving increased powers to the local authority to acquire land, and to make mortgage advances for building, but not to conduct the building of the houses.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said this Bill had been supported from the point of view of the utilisation of land for small holdings as well as from the point of view of housing. The question of the utilisation of land for small holdings was a question of only partial interest. It was much more applicable to certain districts than to the whole of the country. The question of good and cheap houses was one of universal interest and of very real importance. He imagined it would cost a great deal of money, if this Bill was carried out, to remedy the evils from which the country suffered, and if the Local Government Board found a difficulty in assenting to the local authority finding all the money required it might assist them in new ways. Work done by local authorities was apt to be more expensive on the whole than work done by private enterprise. Such work could only compete with the work done by individuals if it were done as cheaply and as efficiently, or more efficiently. The greater portion of the work done by local authorities was apt to be done on a costly basis. This was an aspect of the question which the Local Government Board would do well to investigate. They might provide expert advice for local authorities interested in this subject. There was one study in which he had taken a very great interest, and that was the question of silk culture, and he had noticed that in Germany experts were provided by the Government to give advice to communities and individuals who embarked in that industry. If it was decided to give local authorities larger powers, then it certainly would be desirable for the Local Government Board to provide them with expert advisers. The Local Government Board might also do a great deal of good by engaging in enterprises and exhibitions which would act as object lessons to those who proposed to put the provisions of the Bill into operation. He thought, for instance, the exhibition at Letchworth was an excellent thing. Although it did not produce a cheap house it produced a good house. The main question in a matter of this kind was that the material should be satisfactory, and he thought the Local Government Board might bring the attention of local authorities to suitable plans and the use of materials which were best for those plans. A great deal depended upon railway communications and transport facilities, but local authorities or individuals did not sufficiently appreciate the fact that of the great majority of the materials which could be used in the construction of cheap buildings, those were usually best and cheapest which were to be found in the neighbourhood. Some hon. Members had drawn attention to the fact that it was necessary to avoid a charge upon the rates. That was one of the reasons why it was necessary to give consideration to the points which he had just raised. It was necessary to avoid a heavy charge upon the rates, but he did not think that that charge could be avoided if the system of building in England was adopted for this purpose. It was interesting to note the difference between the building systems of England and Scotland where it was not difficult to get a cheap house. If the local authorities were to do their work with the utmost advantage and to carry out the objects of this Bill, they would be glad of all the help the Local Government Board could give them.

*MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said that all were desirous of alleviating the great misery of the working classes in this regard, and how great that misery was was shown by the speech of the hon. Member for North West Norfolk. How far did this Bill take them, however, in that direction? He considered that no Bill, however excellent, would induce local authorities to put any extra charge on the present rates. When the provisions of this Bill were carried out, who was ultimately going to get the benefit? The present difficulty arose from the fact that the rural landowners of this country would not invest their money in putting up new cottages, because they found those cottages could not pay. The idea of this Bill was that the State should take up the duty of the landlord and put up these cottages, ultimately for the benefit of the landlord. They all admitted that the evil was very great, and it required a remedy; they did want more houses; but he thought that if the State had to come in and do the work which the landlord ought to have done, then the landlords should be made to pay for it. He asked that if there was any charge on the rates for building these houses, that charge should be put on to a special rate to be based on the unimproved value of the land in that district or parish. The landlord got the benefit of these buildings because, if these houses were put up so as to provide cheaper houses for the labouring classes, the labouring classes would receive a lower wage, of which the landlord ultimately got the benefit. Secondly, supposing one could double the number of houses in any particular parish, it was obvious that the value of the land would immediately go up. Because, if the number of the houses and the population were doubled, although they might not double the value of the land, the value of the land would certainly be improved. As the value of the land was improved the State might come in under this Bill and recoup itself by the means which he had suggested. The State could not recover for itself the benefit conferred by its expenditure until it was able to tax land values. They could not hope to get anything but a temporary palliative for this permanent evil so long as the State allowed others to reap the benefit of its efforts.

*CAPTAIN HERVEY (Bury St. Edmunds) said he could not for a moment admit that the statement made by the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme was accurate. Noticing that this Bill was coming before the House to-day and having some experience of the rural districts he had looked up a few figures in order to put before the House the state of things on an estate near his own constituency. Some of the cottages on that estate were let at rentals of as high as £5 per annum, and some as low as 50s.; that was when they were not given free. The average rental of these cottages for the past three years was £420, and the average annual cost of repairs done to them during the same period was £640, and the landowner paid all rates. He would like to know where the advantage to the landlord came in there. It was perfectly well known in the rural districts that if a labourer owned one of these small cottages he had it for a certain time and then he mortgaged it. He did very little repairs to it, and when it was in so tumble-down a condition that he could no longer live in it, he was only too glad to get some landlord to take it off his hands to spend money in putting it into repair and let it back to him at the rent common in the district. And good landlords did take over these properties and let them back to these men, and the majority of the rural landlords of England were good landlords. He had also had some little experience of the opinions of rural authorities as to the building of cottages. The chairman of the parish council of his district came to him one day and said he thought it would be a good thing if the council were to build houses for the labouring classes themselves. He agreed with the chairman of the parish council that it would be a good thing if they could make it a financial success, and he suggested that he had better go and consult with the council and see whether that could be done. A short time afterwards that gentleman came back to him and said they had discussed the matter, and had found that it was absolutely impossible to build cottages that could be let advantageously at anything like the rents at which cottages were now being let in the district. He himself took a great interest in this matter, and should like to see it taken out of the sphere of Party politics. He did not like to see a Bill of this kind treated on the basis of a landlords' and tenants' Bill; he should like to see it dealt with on national lines. There was another small point raised: the question of three acres round the cottage. In some parts of the country that might be an advantage, it depended upon the value of the land for market garden purposes; but his experience was that if they had a small garden allotment round the house that was all the labourers wanted. They liked to grow their vegetables and fruit and things of that sort, but they did not want more. He had noticed that when they had obtained an allotment and at the same time had a garden round the house they often gave up the allotment, and the allotment had to be taken up by a person who probably had a farm besides. He had had the experience of building a pair of cottages which he thought would be suitable to the needs of working-men. They were not ornamental cottages, but they were substantially built and in such a manner that they would not require much repair for many years to come. They were cottages with three bedrooms, a kitchen and living room and usual offices, and fireplaces in two of the bedrooms. The actual cost of those cottages was £620 the pair, and they had since cost £72 for digging a well and for fencing and stocking the gardens. They were let at £4 10s. apiece, £9 per annum the two. That was not exactly what might be termed a financial success, but it gave some idea of what one expected to find when they went into the question of housing the working classes from the financial point of view. It was suggested in this Bill that local authorities should have power to acquire land and to lease it, but if they were going to do that, why not lease the land from the landlord who in many cases would be only too glad to lease it? Why always go for the landlords in this way? He hoped to see this matter dealt with on national lines.

MR. STRAUSS (Berkshire, Abingdon) said that the promoters of the Bill did not for a moment claim that it was a perfect Bill, but only that it was an honest attempt to deal with this grievance, and that it was a Bill upon which the collective wisdom of the House could be brought to bear. The House would lay themselves open to a very serious charge if they did not deal with this question. He knew of many villages where there was not sufficient cottage accommodation. He knew of men who had to walk eight miles to their work. He knew of cases where farmers could not employ the amount of labour they otherwise would because they could not get cottage accommodation. He received only the other day a letter from the vicar of a parish in North Berkshire in which he said that, so far as that district was concerned, there were four farms without a cottage upon them, that the labourers had to seek cottages where they could and that the cottages themselves were very bad. This was only one instance of many in various parts of the country. Anyone who had had any experience of village life knew there were many cottages not fit for human habitation, and that if the unfortunate occupants were turned out they would not be able to find a house to live in except the workhouse. It was, he thought, to their credit that they would put up with any inconvenience rather than go to the workhouse. If the Bill was to be of any practical use the conditions and terms for borrowing money must not be too stringent or too onerous, and the powers of the rural district council must necessarily be great. The hon. Member for Bury St. Edmunds had said there were plenty of good landlords, and he quite agreed with him, but, unfortunately, there were many landlords who had not the means to build these cottages, and they could not expect the tenant farmers to go in for building operations in the present uncertain and, to his mind, rather unsatisfactory state of land tenure in this country. They ran quite enough risk already in sinking their capital in other people's land in ordinary farming operations. Rates and taxes were very high in many rural districts. He had some personal experience, and realised that they must be careful that the conditions for borrowing money were such as could be easily complied with, and that the other terms for erecting cottages could also be carried out, otherwise there would be a difficulty in putting this measure into operation. It was, after all, a national question, and he would say that if a loss did arise from the operations of the Bill it should be borne, at least to some extent, by the Exchequer. He was afraid the question of rating and taxing lay at the bottom of many of our rural problems. Farming and rural industries generally already bore very great burdens, and unless they recognised this question as being a national one and looked to the National Exchequer for some relief he did not think they would make much progress. He considered that this question had got far beyond the stage for tampering and tinkering. It called for some organised attempt to settle the people on the land away from the degrading influences and temptations of our big cities.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said the House had heard many opinions of this Bill, and most interesting speeches had been delivered on both sides. He did not propose to go deeply into the subject, but rather to touch on one or two of the faults of the Bill. All must be in favour of its general principles. One of the most interesting contributions to the debate had been that of the hon. and gallant Member for Bury St. Edmunds, but he should like to correct some of the figures the hon. and gallant Member had given. He himself had built cottages within ten miles of the hon. and gallant Member's projects, and they had fulfilled everyone of the qualifications mentioned; but, instead of costing £620, they only cost £306.

*CAPTAIN HERVEY: Mine were, of course, open to tender, according to specifications.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that his were also. Although they were not exactly the same specifications they fulfilled all the conditions stated by the hon. and gallant Member. Certainly so far as general description went they were identical, though no doubt those referred to by the hon. and gallant Member were more expensive and were better built, but he hoped his would last as long. Of course, what was wanted was not an expensive cottage, and what it was hoped to get as a result of this Bill was not a cottage which was perfectly ideal, but a cottage that was fit to live in. It was scarcely true to say that there was as bad housing accommodation in the towns as in the country. There was more overcrowding in the towns, but he ventured to say there was no house in any town in which it was impossible to stand up in the bedroom. That was a very common thing in the poor districts in the country. Any Bill that would tend to do something to prevent such places being used as habitations would be doing a great humanitarian work. He wished to find fault with one or two things in the Bill. Reading through the long processes that would have to take place for the acquisition of land under Clause 7 one was reminded of a certain Act that was passed by, he believed, a Conservative Government a good many years ago, giving compulsory powers of acquiring allotments. That Act had, he believed, been put into force on one occasion only, and that was in Norfolk, on land which was very poor and worth nothing like £20 an acre. When the local authority had got possession of the land they found it had cost them £60 an acre. The process suggested in Clause 7 was almost identical with that under the Act he had mentioned. What was required was some drastic process, if the land were really wanted for public purposes, whereby there should be a simple reference to a public department which should value the land and give the order for making it over. The good landlord was only too willing to give a piece of land on which people could live. But they had to deal with bad landlords, who constituted the difficulty, though even worse, perhaps, were the impecunious landlords who had no power to deal with their properties because they were tied up. What they had to do was to take such land from the owner's hands for the public advantage. Clause 7 would have to be drastically altered in Committee if the purchase of land for the public good was to be made simple and inexpensive. There was no doubt that the housing question in the rural districts was one of the great problems of the day. It was one of the great causes of the difficulties in agriculture, because in many places the farmer could not obtain an adequate supply of labour, and he believed that in nine cases out of ten the supply had been reduced and kept down by the want of decent houses in which workmen could live. Many other troubles were brought about by bad housing in the rural districts, and anything that could be done to help to remedy the evil ought to be done. The Bill was no doubt an attempt to do something in that direction, but what was really necessary was to make the compulsory powers of acquiring land, whether by local authorities or anybody else so long as it was for the public benefit of the neighbourhood, very much better and cheaper than anything mentioned in the Bill. He was glad that the Bill had been introduced, because it opened up this very important subject, and he hoped something very drastic would be done to help the housing of the working classes.

Mr. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) said he desired to say very few words. First, he wished to support the suggestion that the Bill, after the Second Reading, should be referred to a Select Committee. If it were dealt with by the Committee of the Whole House or referred to one of the Grand Committees it would have no possible chance of passing into law this session, but if referred to a Select Committee, they would at least have its careful examination by an expert Committee, which, he hoped, might lead to some conclusion another session. Those who had brought in this Bill were entitled to the thanks of the House, for although the measure contained many weak points and required considerable amendment, it had given rise to a valuable discussion and brought the question of rural housing somewhat nearer to a solution. The hon. mover of the Second Reading had said with truth that the great bulk of legislation dealing with this subject had proceeded from Conservative Governments. The hon. Gentleman had proceeded to point out that the last measure which sought to deal with the question had had practically no effect, and that his object was to remedy that and to do in rural districts what had already been done to some extent in urban districts. He would mention one matter in which the Bill would have to be amended. The promoters and the draftsman of the measure had fallen into the common misuse of the terms "rural district" and "rural authority." As a matter of fact, a great many districts in the country properly described as urban for local government purposes were really rural in character, and as they required legislation of this kind as much as rural districts, it would be necessary, by some alteration of terms, to bring them within the scope of the Bill. He might claim to have had some personal experience of the subject of rural housing in his own part of the country, besides the advantage of ten years' service at the Local Government Board, and he knew of no subject as to which there were so many fallacies. One hon. Gentleman to-day had had the hardihood to say that one of the difficulties in the way of rural housing was that rural by-laws with respect to building were too strict, and that for that the Local Government Board was to blame. As a matter of fact, the building by-laws were of the most moderate character, and at any rate, if they were excessive, the fault lay not with the Local Government Board, but with the local authority. He could say that during the ten years he was responsible for the Department the only alterations required in rural by-laws were in the direction of securing that the cottages were fit for human habitation. Moreover, in the great majority of the 670 unions of the country there were no by-laws of any sort or kind in force. In his judgment they might pass as many Acts as they liked conferring powers upon local authorities to obtain land on easier terms and to build, but those Acts would not be effective until they made a much wider change. He was aware that it was a favourite belief of supporters of the Government that the majority of landowners, or, at any rate, a large number of them, were very great sinners. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] At all events, they said so, and he would give them the credit of saying what they thought. It had been conceded, however, by some hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House with great generosity and nothing else than truth, that the great bulk of the landowners in this country had done their duty, and the fact had been placed on record by a most interesting inquiry held throughout the country by one of the leading newspapers, which did not favour the political opinions of the Opposition, or of the bulk of the landowning class, that the evil did not arise from neglect of their duties on the part of the landlords. Notwithstanding these facts, the suggestion had been made that even though a resident landlord had provided the cottages necessary to his estate, he should be specially rated in order to make up for the shortcomings of a neighbouring proprietor who was probably an absentee. During the quarter of a century he had sat in the House he had heard many amazing suggestions, but he had never heard one more astonishing or more unjust than that. The difficulty that had to be faced was one of pounds, shillings, and pence. That difficulty would always face them when they approached the question of housing in the rural districts. The question in the urban districts was totally different. There were difficulties in regard to the land question in urban districts, but in 99 per cent. of the rural districts a man who would spend his capital in providing cottages at the normal rents of the locality would find no difficulty in getting land upon which to build them. He had built a good many cottages in his time, and he should say that both £300 and £600, the sums which had been mentioned to-day, were wide of the mark. He should say that a mean of the two figures was much nearer the actual sum. It would not return on an average more 1s. or 1s. 6d. a week in rent. In districts where wages did not reach £1 a week no more than 1s. or 1s. 6d. could be got per week for rent, and at the outside 2s. He would put it at 2s., and the cost of the cottage at £400. It had been suggested that three acres of land should be added to the cottage in order to obtain more rent. But in his experience these allotments were not at all popular, because the labourers thought they would get a better return from their labour by selling it to an employer than by spending it on an allotment. It would be found all over the country that tenants were giving up their allotments. He did not say there were not plenty of labourers who were glad to have allotments as a convenience for providing vegetables for home consumption, but where rent was to be paid for allotments they were given up, because it was not found profitable to cultivate them. Until the pounds, shillings, and pence question was approached in a practical form they would do little to solve the question, and the Bill did not touch the real difficulty. It proposed to retain the district council area as that over which the cost was to be spread. Unless they largely extended the area they would never have the spending power to enable this work to be done. In the areas where the difficulty was most acute, the rural district areas, the rateable value was the least, poverty was the greatest, and the spending power of the union authority was practically *nil.* One of the difficulties in regard to the improving of housing accommodation was that local authorities pointed to the fact that very often a rate of 1s. in the pound produced a mere trifle, and that they would have to double or treble their present rate in order to do anything substantial. Therefore, he thought that for the success of operations under the Bill a larger area than the area of the district council authority was necessary. They had done everything to encourage individuals and local societies to do this work, and yet in many rural districts the accommodation for labourers was bad in quality and insufficient in quantity. If that were the case, it was necessary that legislation should be introduced to get rid of an evil which operated against the manhood of the nation. The Bill was a step in the right direction, but it would not meet the difficulty, because the local authorities had not the means of doing the work. In Committee he would move that the area for the incidence of any expenditure in connection with this work should be the county area and not the district area. Until this matter had been dealt with they could not feel they had discharged their duty to the country. He did not believe the Bill was a real solution of the difficulty, but the House were indebted to its promoters for having provided an opportunity for a practical and useful discussion.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea) said they had had an earnest, kindly, useful, and practical discussion on one of the most serious problems that could engage the attention of Parliament, and it had been absolutely free from Party recriminations. As President of the Local Government Board, he wished to associate himself with every practical suggestion that had been made, and every kindly sentiment that had been expressed. They were all agreed, generally speaking, that the dearth of labour in many rural districts was due to the deficiency of house accommodation. If it was due to a deficiency of cottages, that indicated that private enterprise had failed, or had not met its obligations, and if that were true it was an argument and justification for municipal duty and perhaps Imperial responsibility. It should be remembered that scarcity of work in the rural districts had driven large numbers of bricklayers into the towns, where they displaced their fellow-workmen in the building trades. By encouraging the building of cottages in the rural districts, they would give better accommodation in the country, diminish unemployment in the towns, and improve the physique of the working classes. If they could by private enterprise, municipal activity, or Imperial help, or a combination of all three, build 100,000 cottages in the next five years in rural or semi-rural areas, the expenditure of money on that work would do more good than nine-tenths of the foolish, and often pauperising, palliatives which were suggested for the benefit of workmen in all sorts and conditions of life. It was with those views in his mind that he asked to be allowed to say a few words upon this problem. Some hon. Members had said that these cottages meant a great deal to the rural population. So they did, but they meant a great deal more to the dispossessed town population, who lost their employment in consequence of the migration of people from the country. "Back to the land" was very desirable, but in his judgment it was equally important to prevent those who were on the land from leaving it, and he did not care how that was accomplished, whether by private enterprise, public activity, small holdings, or anything else. He would rather devote his energies for the next ten years to inducing people to stay on the land than exhaust some of his energies in futile efforts trying to get a small number back to the land. Better than an Act of Parliament was a genial spirit of co-operation among individuals and corporate bodies in an attempt to solve this problem. He had nothing but praise for the way in which some landlords had discharged their obligations to their labourers. Those landlords who had not similarly discharged their obligations to their retainers would get more pleasure out of life by imitating the better of their class than by wasting money in less elevating pursuits and on buildings not so creditable to their intelligence. The need for more houses had been made plain. More houses were wanted, but not more owners, and he trusted that the House would agree with him that they should put on one side the idea of helping the average labourer to become his own houseowner. He could not afford it. He would rather advise him to increase his bread bill than to dream of becoming a houseowner. This Bill went a long way towards providing the local means of getting more and better cottages in rural areas, but with the local apathy and indifference which now existed to such a painful extent nothing near the amount of good the promoters suggested would be done by the Bill. One pound of disposition in a district council was worth a ton of Bills, and those housing reformers who blamed the Local Government Board for discouraging housing enterprise did not really know the facts. Speaking on behalf of the Board, he wished to say that they had nothing but praise for individuals who had done their best in this matter, and nothing but admiration for those small districts and rural authorities which had shown such energy and persistence in trying to solve this problem. For some other public bodies and their action in this matter he had nothing but dispraise and blame. He was positively convinced that without a large alteration in the *personnel* of local bodies there would not be much done. Without making insinuations or charges, he would say that there were members of every public body who almost religiously did what they could to frustrate every attempt to act in default of private enterprise, and who, when private enterprise proposed to do anything, fastened on every regulation and used all their ingenuity to frustrate its plans. The Local Government Board had made up its mind, and the staff were determined, that, so far as regulations and facilities were concerned, they would do their best to help the lame dogs over the stile. He had been criticised—but he did not mind that, for responsibility meant criticism, and both meant duty—because he had co-operated with Lord Hylton in regard to his Bill to simplify building by-laws in exclusively rural districts. He would appeal to the House to allow Lord Hylton's measure, supplemented by Local Government Board suggestions, to go through this year, for he believed the time had arrived to try new experiments and even encourage reasonable risks for worthy purposes. But even if that Bill were passed, he believed they would have to work in the face of a lack of sympathy from rural authorities. In fifteen years five rural district councils had built only forty-four houses. He was extremely anxious when he took office to ascertain the facts with regard to the disposition of the local authorities upon this question, and three months ago he issued a circular to them. He was absolutely staggered at the small amount of interest taken and at the relative apathy and positive indifference shown by rural authorities on the subject. The figures were so humiliating that perhaps the House would pardon him for not referring to them beyond saying that they were almost microscopic in their result. It might be said that three months was not a sufficient time to judge, but he was sorry to say he saw no sign of suggestions coming in, but if they could be stimulated in any way to go more rapidly in the direction which they all so much desired he should be only too pleased to help them still further, and he would be willing to make an ample apology if the experience of twelve months did not confirm the view he had formed after three months experience. Some of the promoters of the Bill had said that the power of making by-laws should perhaps be taken out of the hands of the local authorities. Out of 660 of these rural authorities 420 had by-laws which the Local Government Board had sanctioned, and 226 had none at all, and he thought it was safe to assume that those rural authorities who had not taken the trouble to make by-laws, would want something more than a Second Reading speech in the House of Commons to stimulate them into procuring land to build cottages. The impulse must come from men of influence and kindly disposition in their own areas. They should do as Mr. George Cadbury had done at Bournville, as the owner of Port Sunlight had done, as Lord Manners and Lord Hertford and others had done in their districts; and he would only be doing his duty to the brother of the hon. Member for North Down, if he said that hon. Members might do worse with their surplus cash than follow the example of Mr. George Cadbury, Mr. Lever, and Mr. Corbett. He did not hold out a great deal of hope of those individuals being able to influence local authorities as quickly as he would like after finding, as he did, at the end of three months that only twelve out of 660 local authorities had submitted fresh by-laws in answer to the Local Government Board's Circular of January last. Having said that he would come to what was really the root of this question. The ex-President of the Local Government Board had said that this Bill technically had some disadvantages, but that the question at the bottom of the problem was land. Land was at the bottom of houses in more respects than the foundations. This was not the occasion to go into that particular matter, but he was glad that the ex-President of the Local Government Board agreed with him that land was at the bottom of the housing question. He did not want to do the right hon. Gentleman injustice, or to misinterpret him; the kindly speech which he had delivered disarmed anything of that kind.

An HON. MEMBER: Does the right hon. Gentleman suggest that landlords put obstacles in the way?

Mr. JOHN BURNS said he made no suggestion; he simply took up the suggestion of the ex-President of the Local Government Board that land was at the bottom of the question. Why was land difficult to get? The reason was not always a money reason. In too many cases the dislike of landlords to having near them people of the type whom the cottages would house was a difficulty. He was not making that as a general or sweeping statement. The wisdom and the accuracy of the suggestion was demonstrated by the fact that all landlords did not do in this regard what the best landlords did. The inference was that some landlords did give facilities for building and were reasonable in the sale of land. A landlord sometimes did not object to his poorer neighbours standing

"Betwixt the wind and his nobility"

to the extent that other landlords did. If there was any desire on the part of some landlords for privileged and splendid isolation, if they had any mistaken pride or fear of the new tenants being an inconvenience for social or other reasons, then he appealed to them to dismiss all such mistaken sentiments from their minds and to live up to the level of the best of the class to which they belonged. He hoped the appeal would not be made in vain. Others objected because they feared that the new tenants might be potential paupers and that the increase of cottage accommodation might some day be followed by high rates. That was a feeling which ought not to prevail to the extent it now did. In view of the increased facilities for communication by means of trains, tramcars, and bicycles and the increased mobility of labour, he thought building, whether by private enterprise or local authorities, was not now attended by the same risks as there were thirty or forty years ago, when districts were cut off and isolated one from another. Moreover, the increasing intelligence of all classes of workmen had induced them to walk or ride further for better accommodation than their predecessors of twenty, thirty, or forty years ago. He would only add that if some landlords were to extend the area of the building generosity which they had displayed towards those immediately dependent on them to their external neighbours, even if they were to charge for the accommodation in relation to the cost of the buildings, he thought they would not regret having done so.

He came next to the serious point which was really the only objection they all had to the Bill—and that was finance. The question of finance was, perhaps, the chief stumbling-block in the way of providing cheap houses in rural districts. It had been said that the Treasury and the Public Works Loans Commissioners ought to supply cheaper money. He was sorry to say he was not altogether responsible for this part of the matter. The Treasury alone were responsible for the rate of interest charged and the period of the loan, and they could not, he was instructed, see their way to alter their decision. He would, however, do his best to persuade the Public Works Loans Commissioners, the Treasury, and any other public or semi-public body concerned to listen with more sympathetic ears to the plea for cheaper money. If he were to see an Ecclesiastical Commissioner he would make the same suggestion, for he thought the Ecclesiastical Commissioners did their work in towns exceedingly well. It was only right that they should have that said of them. There was one aspect of this question which had not been mentioned by any speaker to-day. He thought some local authorities were unduly apprehensive that if they embarked on house-building it would lead to a higher rate. In many cases that was an exaggerated fear, and certainly local authorities had not hitherto committed themselves very seriously. In fifteen years only five rural authorities had built forty-four cottages. So far as he knew, none of these cottages were empty. There was very little financial risk about that. He would respectfully submit to them and to the House that perhaps a more costly alternative to a slightly higher rate for housing would be still higher rates entailed by overcrowding and the physical and moral deterioration which overcrowding produced. It had also been said that wages did not admit of higher rents. Some wages did not, but even in those cases he believed that it would be safer for the poorest labourer in the rural areas to run the risk of having to pay a little more rent—the difference between profit and loss on the outlay either by private individuals or public authorities, amounting perhaps to 1s. 6d., 1s. 9d., or 2s. a week—than that he should allow his children to labour under the physical and moral disabilities which attended improper housing. He believed if workmen would take that risk, wages would respond to the desire for better environments. He was delighted that the Labour Members on both sides of the House agreed with that view. It seemed to him that there was plenty of scope in some of the rural areas for fathers to spend less money on beer in order that a higher standard of accommodation might be provided for their families. In these days of over-professionalised sport, when 20,000 or 30,000 men could be got to pay 6d. or 9d. a week for the pleasure of beholding gladiatorial combats of which the loafing spectator knew very little, excepting the excitement of looking on at the game, it seemed to him that workmen, skilled and unskilled, might sacrifice something of their so-called "sport" for the improvement of the mental and physical condition of their children. He did not hesitate to say, unpopular though it might be, that it might pay them to act on that suggestion, and he ventured to commend it to their respectful consideration. The ex-President of the Local Government Board and other speakers had said that housing was a national question. He agreed that in many aspects it was a national question. It was undoubtedly true that from the point of view of physical deterioration, housing was a national question. He thought physical deterioration had been grossly exaggerated in recent years, but if improved accommodation would make a man of 5 feet 7 inches in height the father of a son of 5 feet 9 inches or 10 inches fifteen or twenty years hence, he had no objection, though it must be borne in mind that length of timber was not the only consideration. If the urban centres considered that they had to choose between an indefinite increase of the existing evils or a subsidy to rural areas, he thought the House would do well on some other occasion to consider that aspect of the problem. It involved some national scheme. It meant an Imperial grant or subsidy, or an agreement between the Imperial and the local authorities. Such a scheme meant money, and the question was who should pay. Should it be the rural authority or the urban authority? That brought him to the practical point of this afternoon's work. There was unanimity of aim and kinship of desire; there was substantfal agreement on both sides of the House that something had to be done. There were, however, practical difficulties in the way, and he would say to the promoters of the Bill perfectly frankly what they were. The Government would offer no objection to the Second Reading of the Bill, and under other conditions they would have been pleased to give facilities for its going to the ordinary Committee, but he should only in present circumstances—

> "Keep the word of promise to the ear,
> And break it to the hope,"

if he were to accept the Bill as it was with all the alterations that must be made in it, and hold out the prospect of getting it passed this year. The Government could not give facilities for passing it this session, but if the promoters would accept the suggestion which had been made from both sides of the House that it should go to a Select Committee with the object of the Government's using the Bill as the nucleus of a better Bill next year the Government would not be indisposed to accept their responsibilities in that particular regard. He hoped the promoters would allow that to be done. There was no need to have an army of witnesses and a volume of evidence. A dozen men from their own departments could give them the information that was required, and the practical suggestions which had been made by hon. Gentlemen who had taken part in the debate would also receive ample consideration. It was his intention to do something departmentally in the course of the next year or two on this subject. He believed that they would be compelled to take this Bill, Lord Hylton's Bill, and probably some Bill next year of which this might be the nucleus, and by combination of the three, and by codification of the housing laws, reduce the housing problem, both urban and rural, to a condition which would be satisfactory. His only reason for refusing on behalf of the Government to adopt this Bill as a Government measure was that if they did so they should be obliged to break their pledges in regard to other matters.

MR. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford), on behalf of the promoters of the Bill, said that in view of the sympathetic speech of the President of the Local Government Board they felt that they had attained all they could possibly hope for this session. They had elicited from all parts of the House sympathetic speeches, and an indication that something must be done on this serious question. They most readily accepted the proposal that the Bill should be sent to a Select Committee.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said the President of the Local Government Board had referred to the liberality shown by the owner of Port Sunlight, but he should remember that country gentlemen were not all in that gentleman's position. He thought that in their humble way they were endeavouring to fulfil their obligations. The great difficulty they were placed in was that they had not always sufficient money to erect buildings and carry out other improvements which they desired to make on their property. He agreed with what the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had said, that it would be better to ask for more rent for better accommodation and thus at a small sacrifice meet the difficulty.

*MR. BYLES (Salford, N.) said he was very unwilling to inflict himself upon the House as a representativ e f an urban constituency on this question, but, as the President of the Local Government Board had stated, this was a matter which deeply affected not only the country but the town population. One hon. Member who had spoken in the debate had stated that a poor landlord had to let his cottages to the labourers at a very low rent. Of course that merely meant that the labourer was being paid partly by means of money payment and partly by having his cottage at what might be said to be half rent. That was, as a matter of fact, only a kind of evasion of the Truck Act. So long as an agricultural labourer was living in a cottage which was owned by his employer he was under the power of double pressure — the power of the employer and the power of the landlord. What was at the bottom of all these questions? It was the possession of land. This was a rich country and nature was abundantly generous in its response to labour. There were other animals in this island besides man, none of whom had any difficulty in finding a home for themselves. There was not the smallest insect, not a bird which did not find a home for itself, because it had access to the resources of nature. The difficulty in regard to the housing problem had arisen solely from the fact that the people had been divorced from the land.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan, and Kinross) said that this Bill did not apply to Scotland, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board whether, if it were passed, it should be in Committee made applicable to Scotland.

MR. JOHN BURNS said that in this, or in any other Parliament, it would be impossible to ignore the claims of Scotland; and he should say that with the consent of his right hon. friend the Lord-Advocate the Bill would be extended to Scotland.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Select Committee.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. JACKSON (Greenwich), in moving the Second Reading, acknowledged that a large number of Members of the House had come to the conclusion that it was not desirable to press the first and the second clauses of the Bill, and he believed that the President of the Board of Trade agreed with them. Under these circumstances, if the Bill reached its Committee stage he would propose to abandon those two clauses. There remained the very important clause which proposed to repeal Section 633 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894. The meaning of that clause was that when a vessel was under compulsory pilotage and came into collision with another vessel, the owner of that vessel claimed to exempt himself from liability for damages to the owner of the other vessel. The argument was that so long as he was compelled by law to carry a pilot, and damage was done to another ship while the pilot was in charge, the shipowner should not be responsible. There were several reasons why it was desirable, in the interest of a large number of shipowners that Clause 633 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894 should be repealed. If a pilot caused the ship in his charge to run into another he was supposed to be responsible; but it might turn out that he was an impecunious person and no damages could be obtained from him. But, in addition, the law as it at present stood, created a tendency on the part of the pilots to act recklessly in navigating the vessels given into their charge in order to catch a tide. He had had thirty-five years' experience of the navigation of the Thames, and he knew that when a large vessel with, say, 2,000 head of cattle on board, was wanted by its captain to get up on a particular tide, the loss of that tide might lead to considerable loss of money, and the pilot might, therefore, be induced under the circumstances to navigate the ship up the river in the most reckless manner. The Report of the Thames Traffic Committee in 1878–9 stated that—

> "The barge-owners point out with great force that whilst they are bound to employ a particular set of men, they are liable for damage done, whilst if the barges or their cargoes are damaged by a ship in charge of a compulsory pilot, their only remedy is against the pilot."

and further on in the Report that—

> "Under these circumstances your Committee have no hesitation in recommending the abolition of compulsory pilotage above Gravesend."

In 1888 the Select Committee of the House of Commons reported as follows—

> "Your Committee are strongly of opinion, having regard to the views just expressed, that the time has arrived when the exemption of the owner from liability for damage done by his ship, when the ship is placed in charge of a pilot by compulsion of law, should cease to exist. Your Committee are of opinion that such exemption is indefensible, and is inimical to the safety of life and property at sea. In their opinion, the master of a vessel, even while a pilot is on board, should continue to be responsible for the conduct and navigation of his ship."

The Committee, therefore, came to the conclusion that the principle on which this Bill was founded was a right one, and that it should be passed into law as soon as possible. In their Report the Commission appointed to inquire into the Administration of the Port of London in 1902 stated that they agreed with—

> "The Thames Traffic Committee of 1879 in not thinking it necessary that men employed in the navigation of non-passenger-carrying lighters should have any licence, or be subject to any examination. Employers should in this class of craft be left free to employ any man whom they chose, subject to the fullest responsibility of the acts of those whom they employ. An owner who commits valuable cargo to a barge is not, for his own sake, at all likely to select an incompetent crew."

A careful shipowner would use a pilot more as a local adviser. As to the barge owners, the Thames Traffic Committee of 1878–9 in their Report stated that they were strongly of opinion that a time had now arrived when the exemption of owners of ships from responsibility should be abolished. He would remind the House that the Commission of which Lord Ravelstoke was Chairman reported as follows—

> "We have thought it to be our duty to mention complaints as to compulsory pilotage, and its legal results which have been made in the evidence which we have taken, and to call public attention to the forgotten Reports of the Select Committee of 1870, the Thames Traffic Committee of 1879, and the Select Committee 1888. The exemption of ships subject to compulsory pilotage from liability for damages presses with peculiar hardship on the barge owners who are a large and important class in the Port of London. We do not think, however, that it is within the scope of our reference to make any recommendation as to the connection between compulsory pilotage and immunity of a shipowner for damage, which concerns the general law."

It had been suggested that there was a remedy, inasmuch as proceedings might be taken in a court of law against the pilot. He knew from his own personal knowledge that a great majority of these pilots gave a Bill of Sale on their goods and assigned the larger portion of their property to their wives. The only thing they could get out of some of the pilots when they were sued was that they were told they were adjudicated bankrupts. Therefore one could not get any redress from Trinity House or from the pilots, and the barge owners were left without any remedy. There was no remedy for the person who was injured, whether it was a question of loss of life or loss of limb. He submitted that this was a state of things which ought not to be allowed to exist, but it did exist, and in 1870 and 1878 it was made the subject of inquiry and report. It was again made the subject of inquiry and report in 1888, and in other years. The lightermen and barge owners of the City of London pointed out that this injustice existed, and they asked the House to remedy the grievance. He would like to quote to the House instances from the Appendix to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Port of London in which the law relating to compulsory pilotage had proved a hardship. He found forty-five cases of collisions which were produced before the Commission, in which it was said that the plea of compulsory pilotage was set up. He found in 1895 four cases; (1) that of the "Furst Bismarck," in which a claim for £34 was made, but which was marked "Abandoned; pilot impecunious." Similarly in the case of the "Merrimac" a claim of £14 was made but it also had to be abandoned because the pilot was impecunious. In the case of the "Canute" it was stated that the action was lost against the steamer and that the pilot had no money, Further, in the case of the "Jane" and "Louisa" and "Byron" the action against the "Jane" and "Louisa" was lost, but that against the pilot was abandoned. There were many other cases. For instance, barge owners sued the owners of the "Nellie" and the pilot was held to be to blame; the action was, however, abandoned against the pilot and costs amounting to £140 were paid by the plaintiffs in addition to bearing the damage and their own costs of action. There were many cases in the Appendix in which it was stated that the action had been discontinued, the official description being "abandoned; pilot no money"; "Abandoned; pilot undischarged bankrupt"; "Abandoned; pilot impecunious." Again, there were half-a-dozen cases in which, although he was held to be wrong, nothing was recovered from the pilot. In fact, save in one case where £100 was recovered from the pilot, who settled, out of a total of forty-five cases nothing practically was recovered. Of course those cases were not exhaustive, and from his own experience he could supply others. The position he took up was this, that His Majesty's late Government having appointed to consider this question a Select Committee which reported that the present system was absolutely indefensible, that those responsible for the Port of London having reported to the same effect, and it having been shown that gross injustice resulted from the retention of this particular section in the Merchant

Shipping Act, he did think he had made out a case for justice being meted out to all alike. He suggested to the President of the Board of Trade that this Bill should be referred to the Standing Committee, so that its provisions might be properly considered. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman would assent to that course, but, if not, he should be prepared presently, provided that the House passed the Second Reading, to suggest to the House that the Bill should be referred in the way he had suggested. He would not detain the House further as he was one of the advocates for a time limit so far as speeches were concerned, and he hoped they would proceed to a division as soon as possible.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said that he felt that the promoters in bringing the Bill forward, or rather the remains of it, would have been well advised if, having jettisoned Clauses 1 and 2, they had also thrown over Clause 3. Then they might have been unanimous about Clause 4 which simply consisted of the title of the Bill. He would point out to the House that considerable stress had been laid upon the fact that a Select Committee in 1892 recommended the principle laid down in Clauses 1 and 2. No such recommendation even attached to Clause 3, yet Clause 3 was retained and Clauses 1 and 2, the *raison d'etre* of the Bill, were abandoned. He thought that the owners of dumb barges had every right to complain that the clauses which applied to limiting their liability had not been brought before the House. It seemed to him that there might be something to be said for that view, and if he might offer counsel to the mover of the Bill, it would be rather that the principles embodied in Clauses 1 and 2 should have been proposed as Amendments before the Grand Committee on Trade, which had at present under its consideration the larger measure of the amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act, He thought, all the same, when the bargeowners said that they wanted the same principle as regarded limitation of liability as the shipowners that if they came under the methods of measurement as applied by the Board of Trade it would give them a great advantage as compared with the owners of sea-going craft. He thought the tonnage measurement would come out exceedingly small as compared with the dead weight carrying capacities, which in the case of the merchant steamship was about 50 per cent. more in dead weight cargo than the gross register. He thought if the same process of measurement were applied to the dumb barge of the ordinary type as was applied to the merchant sailing vessel or steamship they would probably find that the dead weight capacity would be about three times that of the gross register, and that undoubtedly would constitute a preferential position for the barge owners if they came under the Merchant Shipping Act. He thought the bargeowners should have placed their case before the Grand Committee on Trade in reference to this Bill, and even if the standard of measurement was modified, so long as they obtained a limitation of liability he could not help thinking that the House would in that case, at any rate, have given the matter fair consideration. However, the clauses dealing with this matter had been thrown overboard, and whilst he had always been sympathetic with bargeowners to that extent, his sympathy in a practical way and the sympathy of others in that House was going to be thrown to the winds, because Clauses 1 and 2 were thrown over.

The clause which remained, however, contained such a revolutionary project that he could not for a moment think that the House would entertain the principle of it. What did it mean? It meant that in regard to the 10,000,000 of gross British tonnage which represented the British Mercantile Navy at the present time, they were going, by a Bill introduced by bargeowners — and might he say almost entirely at the instance of London bargeowners — to change the law and bring upon that tonnage a great liability. This Bill as originally presented sought to minimise or reduce the liability of bargeowners. That might be a reasonable thing to do, but on the other hand the clause in the Bill which remained increased enormously the liability of the shipowners. It seemed to him that the Bill was drafted on the lines of trying to make the best of both worlds, and if, as a bargeowner, he could succeed in reducing his liability and at the same time increase enormously the liability of the interests with which he had connection or dealings, he should think he had done a good day's work. But he did think that the reasonable people among the bargeowners should be and would be satisfied with the first condition, and that was a limitation of liability. Why should shipowners, who were compelled to employ pilots, be made liable for their actions? It was well enough known that shipowners would prefer to be free from compulsory pilotage. They were quite prepared under proper conditions, under which they could control the pilot and make selections, to use their own knowledge and experience. In other words, if they committed their property with safety to the charge of tried men, they would emphatically prefer that system rather than one which, against their will, imposed pilots—he was happy to think not all of the character referred to by the mover of this Bill—upon them.

*Mr. JACKSON said he did not say that the whole of them were of that character but part of them were.

*Mr. CAIRNS replied that that was exactly what he was saying. He was pointing out that they were not all of the character the hon. Member had described in regard to some of them.

Some of them were very substantial men and had balances at the bank which, if they could be revealed, would raise a natural feeling of envy in the minds of many Members of the House. He did not know whether that statement would reassure the bargeowners, but surely it would be better to have prosperous pilots responsible rather than impecunious shipowners. He hoped that the House would consider that where shipowners were compelled against their will and without any option on their part to employ pilots in certain waters, it was reasonable that when control was taken out of their hands they should not be responsible for any accident which ensued in consequence. The shipowners themselves were in the same boat as the Thames bargeowners. Supposing a vessel valued at £50,000 was coming up the River Thames and received damage from another vessel, the other vessel being in charge of a compulsory pilot, she had no recourse against the vessel which inflicted the damage. In this way shipowners were in the same boat as the bargeowners, with this difference, that in the case of the bargeowners the value of their craft was comparatively small when taken against that of steamships or large sailing vessels. The remedy, therefore, of the bargeowner was more substantial than that of the shipowner. The shipowner never thought of having recourse against the pilot, because the large amount of the claim would financially swamp any pilot, however wealthy he might be. Shipowners, however, took the practical course of taking all these conditions into account, and in arranging their insurances they adjusted them to meet these contingencies. He did not see why bargeowners should not do the same thing, and he believed they did so, and if they did not he must say they conducted their business in a way which was very different from the ordinary practice. Perhaps it was to be inferred that they had such ample assets or reserves as to justify them in taking such an enormous risk. Shipowners had a right to lodge a strong complaint against the damage which their ships received and the damages they had sometimes to pay to bargeowners, especially to the owners of barges in the London river. He would ask hon. Members to consider what happened when a vessel was coming up the London river just at the beginning of the ebb, when these barges were coming down not in their hundreds but in their thousands, and the vessel had to navigate through them. Trying to reach the North Pole through floes of ice was nothing compared to it, and if one did any damage to a floe of ice one would not be brought into a court of law. The shipowners of this Kingdom considered that they paid for all the repairs of the London barges and that they renewed them all in a course of ten years by the payment of claims for damages. Claims were brought against them and they had to pay heavy damages, as with two or three hundred barges around at the time of the accident it was very easy for the bargeowners to get witnessess who would support their claim. He believed the Bill was being brought forward at the instance of only a section of the bargeowners of the country. He represented a constituency on the banks of the Tyne and they had many barges there. They had also a great number of lighters the operations of which were confined to river purposes. He had not however, received a single request from any lighter owner or bargeowner to support this Bill, and he had not heard from any part of the country any representation in its favour except from London. The fact was that it was the bargeowners of London—some of those syndicates which almost amounted to a monopoly of trade—who sought immunity and to extend the liability of vessels, so that the barges which were now renewed every ten years by the shipowners should in future be renewed every five years. He would strongly advise those who were interested in the reputation of the Port of London—he might say the declining reputation of the Port of London—that they should not seek to put any further impediments or place further disadvantages upon this great port in addition to those which already existed. The conditions of navigation in the Thames were known not only to owners of British vessels but to the owners of the vessels of other nations, and they would find great difficulty, indeed, in inducing foreign or even British owners to charter for the Port of London if the liabilities and difficulties were increased. He felt justified, therefore, in calling upon all those who wished to make the Port of London attractive among the ports of the world unanimously to resist this Bill. The value of the British mercantile fleet might be taken at anything from £80,000,000 to £110,000,000, and he was sorry that the hon. Gentleman who introduced this Bill did not give some data to show to what extent barge owners had suffered detriment taken over a course of years. They were told of one or two cases where the pilot was impecunious and where there was a claim against him for £14 or £24, but surely in an important matter like this the House was not going to be influenced by petty sums like that. He thought that upon the Second Reading of a Bill like this they were entitled to have a comprehensive presentation of the figures that they were dealing with. They had had no such figures presented, and he felt that if there was any hardship, and if that hardship was widespread, they ought to take into consideration all the claims, whatever they might be. But in the absence of any such information he hoped the House would not entertain the idea of proceeding further with this Bill. He begged to move as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton) seconded the Motion for the rejection, and said that the subject was so important that it was impossible to deal with it at the end of a sitting. The hon. Member for Newcastle had stated with great force and cogency the considerations which ought to guide the House in dealing with the Bill, and therefore it was not necessary for him to enlarge upon them. The tonnage of this country amounted to some 10,000,000 tons, and this was a proposal to inflict upon our shipping a serious burden in the future. Such a proposal was in conflict not only with the Merchant Shipping Act but with the common law of the country which was incorporated in the Merchant Shipping Act. The law as it now stood existed in the common law long before it was made the subject of statutory provision. The principle underlying the law was that while they might well make a man liable, even at the cost of individual hardship, for the wrongdoing or fault by any error of omission or commission of an agent whom he had chosen for himself, and in the selection of whom he might have shown incompetence or negligence, they must not make him liable because of an act of omission or of commission by an agent who was imposed upon the man against his will and in pursuance of a policy which he most bitterly resented. The principle of the Bill was one which could not be applied without injustice, and there was no principle in the whole law of agency such as was incorporated in this measure. If the principal or employer had been in a position to exercise an independent judgment in the employment of his agent, he might well be made liable for the acts of that agent; but who chose the pilot for whose acts it was sought to make the shipowner responsible? He was chosen by a committee over whose action the shipowner had no control and in whose proceedings he had no voice. It might be that the committee had a particular standard in regard to pilots which would not commend itself to any business man. Let them take the principal Pilotage Committee and its decisions. He had been engaged in the Admiralty Division in many of these cases, and he knew that a very lenient view indeed was taken in regard to pilots against whom negligence had been found. He had known pilots reinstated in whose reinstatement he would never have acquiesced. Could it be that the House was going to make a shipowner liable for the negligence of a pilot who had been sent on board his ship against his will and who had been found guilty of negligence in a previous case? Moreover, could such a provision be introduced into the law after a brief discussion at the end of an afternoon sitting? There was still another consideration, and one of the greatest importance, and that was that the public and the bargeowners had a safeguard as far as the owners were concerned, which was as great as they could legitimately ask for.

And, it being Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

GROUND GAME.

Bill to amend The Ground Game Act, 1880, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Beale, Viscount Dalrymple, Mr. Lane-Fox, Major McMicking, Mr. Osmond Williams, and Mr. Erskine.

GROUND GAME BILL.

"To amend The Ground Game Act, 1880," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 11th, and to be printed. [Bill 178.]

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at three minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 30th April, 1906.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with:—Poole Corporation Water; Sutton District Water.

Also the Certificates that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in respect of the petitions for the following Bills:—Ritz Hotel, Limited; Crellin's Patents.

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Metropolitan Police Provisional Order; Scottish Provident Institution Buildings [H.L.]; Epsom and Ewell Gas; Dowlais Gas; Merthyr Tydvil Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned on Monday, the 9th instant, until Tomorrow; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

West Cumberland Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Chancellor informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The Orders made on 19th March last and the 3rd instant discharged. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill; Post Office (Money Orders) Bill; Notice of Accidents Bill; Police (Superannuation) Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Carlisle Corporation Bill; Todmorden Corporation Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill; Bacup Corporation Bill; Cardiff Gas Bill; North East Lincolnshire Water Bill; Thornton Urban District Gas Bill; Macclesfield and District Tramways Bill; New Mills Urban District Council Bill; Uxbridge Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Wallis' Divorce Bill [H.L.]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]; Dover Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]. The order made on Tuesday, the 13th of March, appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged.

Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Verulam, the Earl of Eldon, the Viscount Hill, and the Viscount Colville of Culross be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Harrowby, the Lord Monson, the Lord Seaton, and the Lord Somerton (*E. Normanton*); read, and agreed to.

Clacton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Newport Corporation Bill [H.L.]; West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Bury Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; County of Durham Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]; Cumberland Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Viscount Ridley; read, and agreed to.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Railway Clearing System (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill [H.L.]; Crediton Lighting and Power Bill [H.L.] Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.] Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Ravensworth be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Leigh; read, and agreed to.

Hull and Barnsley Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: the orders made on the 8th of March last and the 3rd instant discharged, and Bill committed.

Haslingden Corporation Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The orders made on the 5th of March last and the 3rd instant discharged, and Bill committed.

Truro Gas Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The orders made on the 12th of March last and the 3rd instant discharged, and Bill committed.

South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The orders made on the 8th of March last and the 3rd instant discharged, and Bill committed.

Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.]. Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]; Clacton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of maintenance of existing religious teaching in Church of England schools of—

1. Parents and guardians of children attending schools at Darwen; Darwen, St. John the Evangelist; Darwen, St. John, Central; Manchester, St. Stephen's; Manchester, Stowell Memorial; Manchester, St. Peter's, Westleigh; Manchester, St. Wilfrid's; Manchester, St. Andrew's; Manchester, Christ Church; Appley Bridge, Manchester; Laugho, Manchester; Hornby, Manchester; Ashworth, Manchester; Dobcross, Manchester; Barrowford, Manchester; Holme-in-Cliviger, Burnley; Chorlton-cum-Hardy; Eccleston; Hulme, St. Michael's; Hulme, St. Philip's; Hulme, St. Mary's; Hulme, St. John the Baptist; Woodford, Chester; Gorton, All Saints'; Pendleton, John Street School; Oldham, St. Mary's; Newton Heath, All Saints'; Salford, St. Stephen's; Fallowfield and Ladybarn; Chorlton-on-Medlock, St. Luke's; Pendlebury, Christ Church; Levenshulme, St. Andrew's; Heywood, All Souls'; Scotforth, St. Paul's; Burnage; Todmorden; Horwich; Adlington; Douglas, near Southport; Walton-le-Dale; Overton; Brindle Heath; Flixton; Lougton, Manchester; Royton, St. Anne's; Royton, All Saints'; Royton, St. Paul's; and Preston, St. James'.

2. Petitions in favour of Religious Liberty, sound Religious Education for children according to the faith of their parents, and the maintenance of denominational training colleges, of teachers

in schools at Holme-in-Cliviger, Burnley; Darwen; Manchester, St. Stephen's; Manchester, Stowell Memorial; Manchester, St. Andrew's; Newton Heath; Chorlton-cum-Hardy; Douglas, near Southport; Eccleston; Hornby, Manchester; Hesketh, near Preston; Laugho, Manchester; Dobcross, Manchester; Whitworth, Rochdale; Gorton, All Saints'; Pendleton, John Street School; Barrowford, Manchester; Newton Heath, All Saints'; Salford, St. Stephen's; Fallowfield and Ladybarn; Walton-le-Dale; Todmorden; Preston, St. James'; Royton; Levenshulme, St. Andrew's; Heywood, All Souls'; Scotsforth, St. Paul's; Adlington; Miles Platting, St. Luke's; Brindle Heath; Flixton; Pendlebury, Christ Church; Hulme, St. Mary's; Chorlton-on-Medlock, St. Luke's; Hulme, St. John the Baptist; Droylesden; Burnage; Oldham, St. Mary's; and Bury (Elton), All Saints'.

Read and ordered to lie on the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS—RECESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the following Papers, having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty, had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz.:

MINES AND QUARRIES.

I. General Report and Statistics for 1904—Part IV. Colonial and Foreign Statistics. Statistics relating to persons employed, output, and accidents at mines and quarries in the British Colonies and in Foreign Countries. (April 10.)

II. Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines under the Coal Mines Regulation Acts, 1887 to 1896, the Metalliferous Mines Regulations Acts, 1872 and 1875, and the Quarries Act, 1894, for the year 1905. East Scotland District, R. McLaren; West Scotland, R. M. Ronaldson; Newcastle, J. B. Atkinson; Durham, R. Donald Bain; York and Lincoln, W. Walker; Manchester and Ireland, John Gerrard; Liverpool and North Wales, Henry Hall; Midland, A. H. Stokes; Stafford, W. N. Atkinson; Cardiff, F. A. Gray; Swansea, J. T. Robson; Southern, J. S. Martin. (April 10.)

BANKING, RAILWAY, AND SHIPPING STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Report on the Banking and Railway and Shipping Statistics of Ireland, for the half-year ended 31st December, 1905. (April 10.)

TRADE REPORTS (I. ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3549. Chile (Coquimbo).

No. 3550. Austria-Hungary (Triéste).

No. 3551. United States (Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky). (April 10).

No. 3552. Italy (Genoa).

No. 3553. Colombia (Santa Marta). (April 11).

No. 3554. France (Réunion).

No. 3555. Norway (April 19).

No. 3556. Greece (Morea, Aetolia, and Acarnania).

No. 3557. Argentine Republic (Buenos Ayres).

No. 3558. Venezuela (Ciudad Bolivar) (April 19).

No. 3559. Greece (Corfu).

No. 3560. Sweden (Stockholm and Eastern Coast of Sweden). (April 20).

No. 3561. Turkey (Palestine). (April 21).

No. 3562. Egypt (Alexandria). (April 24).

No. 3563. Germany (Leipzig). (April 26).

No. 3564. United States (States of California, Nevada, and Utah, and Territory of Arizona).

No. 3565. Italy (Rome).

No. 3566. Russia (Batoum). (April 27).

II. MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

No. 646. Persia (Persian Customs Regulations).

No. 647. United States (Turpentine Industry). (April 10).

No. 648. Italy (Agriculture of Tuscany). (April 21).

POST OFFICE.

I. Additional articles to the Money Order Convention between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office Denmark, dated 20th December, 1905 and 23rd January 1906. (April 10).

II. Agreement between the Post Office, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, and Ireland and the Royal Imperial Austrian Postal Administration concerning the exchange of money orders. (April 10).

III. Agreement for an exchange of money orders between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Hungary, dated 28th October, 1905, and 16th November, 1905. (April 27).

IV. Agreement for an exchange of money orders between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Switzerland, dated 8th–17th October, 1905. (April 27).

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE (OBSERVATORY).

Report of His Majesty's Astronomer at the Cape of Good Hope to the Secretary of the Admiralty, for the year 1905. (April 10).

FIRE BRIGADES AND FIRES, 1903 (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Return relative to Fire Brigades and Fires in England and Wales, for the year 1903. (April 11).

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF (INTERIM STATEMENT)).

Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Austria-Hungary as modified by commercial treaties with Germany, Russia Italy, Belgium, and Switzerland. (April 11).

INDIA TRADE.

Tables relating to the trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries, 1900–1901 to 1904–1905. (April 11).

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1877.

Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the Sixty-seventh Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland (April 11),

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

Return of grants of land in the East Africa Protectorate from 1st January 1904, to 31st December, 1905 (in continuation of [Cd. 2331] Africa, No. 15 of 1904). (April 19).

UGANDA PROTECTORATE.

Report on a botanical mission through the forest districts of Buddu and the Western and Nile Provinces of the Uganda Protectorate by Mr. M. T. Dawe, officer-in-charge, Forestry and Scientific Department. (April 19).

ELECTRIC POWER AND SUPPLY BILLS.

Memorandum by the Commissioners of Works. (April 19).

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS, HONG KONG, GIBRALTAR.

Further correspondence relating to measures adopted for checking the spread of venereal disease (in continuation of [Cd. 9253], September 1899). (April 19).

NATIONAL GALLERY, &c. (SCOTLAND).

Twelfth Annual Report to the Secretary for Scotland by the commissioners and trustees of the Board of Manufactures in Scotland, for the year ended 30th September, 1905. (April 19).

ROYAL OBSERVATORY, EDINBURGH.

Sixteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer-Royal for Scotland. (April 19).

CROFTERS HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS, 1886–1887.

Report by the Crofters Commission being for the year ended 31st December, 1905. (April 19).

TRADE.

Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom with Foreign Countries and British Possessions, 1905, compared with the four preceding years: Volume I. (Summaries, abstract, and detailed tables of imports and exports). (April 19).

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND).

Fifth Annual General Report of the Department, 1904–1905. (April 19).

TREATY SERIES, No. 3 (1906).

Treaty of commerce and navigation between the United Kingdom and Roumania; signed at Bucharest, 31st October, 1905. (Ratifications exchanged at Bucharest, 17th March, 1906). (April 23).

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (GREAT BRITAIN).

Forty-ninth Report for the year 1905 of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. Part I. List of Schools and detailed Reports. (April 25).

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (LOUPING - ILL AND BRAXY COMMITTEE).

Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to inquire into the Aetiology, Pathology, and Morbid Anatomy and other matters connected with the diseases of sheep, known as Louping-Ill and Braxy.

Part I. General Report.

Part II. Details of Investigation.

Part III. Summary of Suggestions. (April 25).

EGYPT, NO. 1 (1906).

Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General, on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1905. (April 25).

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Report and Papers relating to the training of teachers, for the year 1904–1905. (April 27).

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT ACT, 1903.

Report of the Lord-Lieutenant of all his proceedings under the Act, for the financial year ended 31 March, 1906. (April 27).

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887.

Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the quarter ended 31st March, 1906. (April 27).

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACTS, 1854-1894.

Seventeenth Annual Report of the Railway and Canal Commission, with Appendix. (April 28).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON ENDOWED CHARITIES).

Report made to the Board of Education in the result of an inquiry into endowments subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part to purposes of elementary education in the administrative county of Northampton or in any part thereof.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with Appendix, 1905–1906.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890 (SIAM).

Order passed at the Council held on April 4th, 1906, under the authority of a Royal Commission, entitled "The Siam Order in Council, 1906."

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894 (COLLISIONS AT SEA).

Order, passed at the Council held on the April 4th, 1906, under the authority of a Royal Commission, making provision as to lights and signals of fishing vessels in substitution for those contained in Article 10 of the Regulations scheduled to the Order in Council of August 11th, 1884, as amended from time to time.

COUNTY COURTS.

Rules, 1906; explanatory memorandum.

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS, ENGLAND AND WALES).

Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, for the year ended September 29th, 1905.

LOCAL LOANS FUND (ACCOUNTS, 1904–1905).

Accounts of receipts and payments by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, in respect of the capital and income of the local loans fund, for the year ended March 31st, 1905; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon.

IRISH LAND PURCHASE FUND ACCOUNTS (1903–1905).

Accounts of receipts and payments by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the capital and income of the Irish Land Purchase Fund, from November 1st 1903 to March 31st 1905; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon.

PUBLIC RECORDS (PRISON COMMISSION).

Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents existing or accruing in the office of the Commissioners of Prisons and Directors of Convict Prisons, which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY BOROUGH OF TYNEMOUTH).

Order made by the council of the county borough of Tynemouth dividing the borough into polling districts.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Orders made by the councils of the following city, county, and county borough, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department fixing the hours of closing for certain shops in the city and county of Bristol; county borough of Bolton.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853–1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Licences granted by His Majesty under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864, to Frederick Sadler, William Jones, James Kitching.

PRISONS, ENGLAND AND WALES (TREATMENT OF SELECTED MALE CRIMINAL PRISONERS).

Draft of rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under Section 25 of the Prisons Act, 1877, and Section 2 of the Prisons Act, 1898, appropriating Borstal Prison and part of Lincoln Prison to selected male criminal prisoners, and providing as to the treatment of selected male criminal prisoners between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one under special rules.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) ACT, 1890.

Account showing receipts and expenditure on account of proceedings under the Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890, during the year ended March 31st, 1906.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS.)

Account showing the receipts and expenditure on account of bankruptcy proceedings during the year ended March 31st, 1906.

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.

Account up to March 31st, 1906.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated April 12th, 1906, declaring that Robert William Street, boy, Ordnance Vessel "Prudent" War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

Treasury warrant, dated April 23rd, 1906, amending warrant of September, 1887, relating to the grant of gratuities and allowances under Section 1 of the Superannuation Act, 1887.

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.

Account up to March 31st, 1906.

PUBLIC RECORDS (IRELAND) ACT, 1867.

Rules made under Section 17 of the Act.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Accounts showing the sums received and expended for the purposes of the Metropolitan Police and Police Pension Funds between April 1st, 1905 and March 31st, 1906.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877.

Statutes made by the Governing Body of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, on December 29th, 1905, amending certain of the Statutes of the college.

Statutes made by the Governing Body of Merton College, Oxford, on

December 9th, 1905 (and sealed on December 14th, 1905), altering and amending Statutes III., V., and VIII. of the Statutes of the college.

Statutes made by the Governing Body of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, on (1) April 23rd, 1904 (and sealed on December 13th, 1905), amending Statute 24 (*b*); and (2) December 2nd, 1905 (and sealed on December 13th, 1905), amending Statutes 24 (*b*) and 32(*a*) of the Statutes of the college.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 55.)

THAMES CONSERVANCY.

General Report of the Proceedings of the Conservators of the River Thames during the year ended December 31st, 1905, with Statement of the Accounts of the Conservators of the River Thames for that year: Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

WESTMINSTER BRIDGE AND THE THAMES EMBANKMENT.

Return respecting: Laid before the House (pursuant to order of the 8th of March last), and to be printed. (No. 54.)

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL.

Read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a to-morrow (The Lord Denman). (No. 56.)

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

Read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a to-morrow (The Lord Granard [*E. Granard*]). (No. 57.)

NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS BILL (No. 58).
POLICE SUPERANNUATION BILL (No. 59).

Read 1^a, and to be printed.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY BILL.

Order of the day for the House to be in Committee, read, and discharged.

GERMAN GIPSIES IN SCOTLAND.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: My Lords, before the Motion for the adjournment of the House is put I should like to ask a Question on which I have given private notice. I cannot say that it is on a subject of first-class importance, but the matter with which it deals has caused a good deal of inconvenience during the last three or four weeks in that part of Scotland which I know best. About a month ago there was a considerable incursion of German gipsies. I believe they came over to the number of eighty at one time. They marched through various counties commencing on the South bank of the Forth and reaching as far as Stirling, and when I tell your Lordships that they even encamped upon the historic plains of Bannockburn the House will understand how much feeling in the locality was stirred. I am informed that they committed various depredations. Not only did they steal from poultry yards and so on, but they even milked some of the farmer's cows before their owners got up in the morning. They also did a considerable amount of damage, and at last the services of the police had to be invoked. Whether or not it has been possible for the authorities to re-transport them to Germany I cannot say, but there have been reports—well founded, I believe—that larger numbers still were coming. I believe it is the fact that a small number came last year and the year before and that they found the country such a land of promise that they circulated reports of their prosperity, and others have since come. A rumour has appeared in the newspapers to the effect that this incursion is likely to continue. The German Government have been passing laws to endeavour to get this class of people to settle down and become orderly subjects, but, resenting this, they are leaving Germany. I do not know whether, under the powers of the much controverted Aliens Act or by representations to the authorities in Germany, His Majesty's Government can do anything to abate a state of things which, though it has, I admit, its humorous side, has also its serious aspect.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, in the absence of my noble friend who represents the Scottish Office, I have been asked to reply to this Question. I think my noble friend opposite will admit that this is rather a far cry from the

Admiralty. Though we are very ready to protect the country against raids, I am afraid that the prevention of a raid of this sort is even beyond the power of His Majesty's ships. I believe the facts are substantially as stated by my noble friend. These are not persons who would come under the Aliens Act, because, in the first place, they arrived in different ships in numbers fewer than twenty. We have no information that such legislative measures as my noble friend suggested are being taken in Germany. What we are told is that these German gipsies belong to a tribe whose chief lives in Italy, and that they are birds of passage in Scotland on their way to Italy. They are not entirely without means of subsistence, as has been suggested. They have horses and carts of sorts—I believe not very good ones—and they are also adepts in certain acrobatic performances. They are wandering about Scotland getting money by horse dealing and by giving acrobatic shows, and I am told that they have been so far successful that they have from time to time made as much as from £3 to £5 a day out of their performances. From what we can gather these people are perfectly peaceable and quiet. It is true that they have, after the fashion of gipsies, been guilty of some petty larcenies, but the offences have not been of a serious character. Though they do not come within the scope of the Aliens Act so far as their entry into this country is concerned, Clause 3 of the Act does give power to deport them if they prove undesirable; but there does not at present seem to be any reason why such action should be taken against them. I think that perhaps too much attention has been paid to them by the police, and that they have been unduly hustled from county to county. I hear further, that some German residents in Glasgow are taking steps to induce them to return to their own country or to go on to their chief in Italy without delay. I do not think this is a matter on which I need detain your Lordships longer, or which is likely to cause much difficulty to His Majesty's lieges.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, at half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 30th April, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY) BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. —London County Council (Money) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz :—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill).

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time to-morrow.

PRIVATE BILLS PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Crellin's Patents Bill [Lords]; Ritz Hotel, Limited, Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Midland Railway Bill (King's Consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed.

Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords] (by Order). Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill, "to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the Urban District of Sligo and the Counties of Kildare and Limerick," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Bryce; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 179.]

North Berwick Corporation Order Confirmation Bill, "to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to North Berwick Corporation," presented by Mr. Sinclair, and ordered (under Section 7 of the Act), to be considered upon Wednesday.

Cathcart District Railway (Superfluous Lands) Order Confirmation Bill "to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to the Cathcart District Railway," presented by Mr. Sinclair, and ordered (under Section 7 of the Act) to be considered upon Wednesday.

Electric Power and Supply Bills Ordered, That the Memorandum by the Commissioners of Works on Electric Power and Supply Bills be referred to the Committee on the London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill.—(*Mr. Harcourt.*)

Corporation of London (Blackfriars and other Bridges) Bill, reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Wandsworth and Putney Gas (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill, reported [parties do not proceed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill, reported; Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

CLERKS OF THE PEACE AND COUNTY COUNCILS BILL.

Petition from Bury St. Edmunds, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Aldwarke (No. 2); Bruntcliffe; Bwllfa; Cadeby Main; Cwmaman; Dinnington; Ellenborough; Gelli Ilaf; Greasbro; Heckmondwike; Hickleton Main; Kiveton Park; Low Laithes; Moorhouse Guards; Nantymelyn Gray; Old St. Helen's, Robin Hood; Rotherham; Scholes; and, Silverwood Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Stoke Bruerne, against; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Ampfield; Arreton (two); Aycliffe; Barton upon Irwell (two); Baschurch, Biggin; Biggleswade; Bellerby (two); Billingham (two); Birmingham; Blackpool (two); Bournemouth; Boxmoor (two); Burghclere; Burnley; Bury (two); Carlton Scroop; Clifton; Clifton Brighouse; Cockayne Hatley; Compton and Shawford (two); Croft; Deaf Hill cum Langdale; Duddeston; Durham; Egglescliffe; Elton; Elwick Hall (two); Eversley; Fair Oak (two); Fakenham (two); Fyfield; Grateley (two); Greywell (two); Hadleigh (two); Hampton; Hampton Hill; Hampton Wick; Hannington; Harrold; Hatherden in Andover (two); Hathersage (two); Hay (two); Hornsea; Houghton le Spring; Kelloe; Kingsclere (two); Kingsley (two); Laverstoke; Lightcliffe (two); Margate; Mirfield (two); Monk Hesleden, Morley cum Churwell (two); Newmarket (two); Northampton (two); Nottingham; Rookhope; Ruislip; St. Mary Bourne; St. John's in the Vale (two); Savile Town (two); Sherburn; Shincliffe; South Helton; South Tidworth; Stockbridge (two); Stoke Charity; Teddington (two); Ticehurst (two); Tostock; Tredington; Welton; Westbrook; Margate; West Stow; Whitchurch (two); Woolton Hill (two); and Wouston; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION OF DEFECTIVE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ENDOWED CHARITIES (ELEMENTARY EDUCATION) (NORTHAMPTON).

Copy presented, of Report made to the Board of Education in the result of an Inquiry into Endowments subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part to proposals of Elementary Education in the Administrative County of Northampton or in any part thereof (by command); to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Merton College, Oxford, on December 9th, 1905, altering and amending Statutes III., V., and VIII. of the College Statutes (by Act); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 141.)

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, on April 23rd, 1904, amending Statute XXIV. (b), and on December 2nd, 1905, amending Statutes XXIV. (b) and XXXII. (a) of the College Statutes (by Act); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 142.)

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (CAMBRIDGE).

Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, on December 27th, 1905, amending certain of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 143.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 4th April, 1906, making provision as to lights and signals of fishing vessels in substitution for those contained in Article 10 of the Regulations scheduled to the Order in Council of August 11th, 1884, as amended from time to time [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of April 4th, 1906, entitled The Siam Order in Council, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

Account presented, of the Gross Public Income and Expenditure in the year ended March 31st, 1906, together with the Balances in the Exchequer at the commencement and at the termination of the year, and the amounts received into or issued from the Exchequer in respect of Funded and Unfunded Debt created or redeemed in the said year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed [No. 144.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Warrant, dated April 23rd, 1906, amending Warrant of September 1887, relating to the grant of gratuities and allowances, under Section 1 of The Superannuation Act, 1887 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade up to the 31st December, 1905, and of the proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 145.]

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACTS, 1854 TO 1894,

Copy presented, of Seventeenth Annual Report of the Railway and Canal Commission, with Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY BOROUGH OF TYNEMOUTH).

Copy presented, of Order made to the Council of the County Borough of Tynemouth, dividing the Borough into Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Bolton, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for barbers' and hairdressers' shops within the borough [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Accounts presented, of the Metropolitan Police and the Police Pension Funds for the year ended March 31st, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 146.]

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with Appendix, 1905–6 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DRUMDOE, COUNTY ROSCOMMON (INQUIRY).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered April 11th; *Mr. James O'Kelly*]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC RECORDS (IRELAND) ACT 1867.

Copy presented, of Rules made under the Public Records (Ireland) Act, 1867, dated April 2nd, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1906–7).

Copy ordered, "of Statement of Revenue and Expenditure as laid before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget."—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 147.]

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).

Address for "Return showing the estimated position, as regards capital expenditure, of the several Railways and Irrigation Works under construction in India on the 31st day of March, 1906, and the proposed expenditure thereon during 1906–7 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 163, of Sesson 1905)."—(*Mr. Robert Price.*)

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

Copy ordered "of Statistical Tables relating to Emigration and Immigration from and into the United Kingdom in the year 1905, and Report to the Board of Trade thereon."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Naval Shipbuilding Designs.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Admiralty are prepared to follow the precedent of 1889, when Sir William White was permitted to read a paper on the naval designs of ships, by permitting Sir Philip Watts to read a similar paper for purposes of discussion; and, failing this, whether they will afford information before Vote 8 is discussed similar to that given by the American, French, and German naval authorities.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The reply to the first portion of the Question is in the negative. A Statement on the "Dreadnought" design will be made when Vote 8 is under discussion, which it is hoped will afford the information desired by the hon. Member.

Court Martial on Captain Grogan.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether Captain Grogan, of H.M.S. "Donegal," was informed that he had been superseded in the command of his ship immediately prior to his trial by court martial; and, if so, whether there is any precedent for such action on the part of the Admiralty; and whether the Admiralty took into consideration the effect the decision would have on the minds of the officers constituting the court.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Captain Grogan was not superseded, but remained in command of the "Donegal" until the ship was paid off with a view to the necessary repairs being undertaken. It was not considered that the court would have been in any way biassed by the fact that Captain Grogan was not appointed to a new command while a charge of negligence was pending against him.

Closure of Navy Votes.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what Navy Votes were closured without discussion in 1903, 1904, and 1905, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The information is as follows:—1903 None; 1904, 3 Votes, viz., 5, 12, and 14; 1905, 11 Votes, viz., 2 to 7, 9, 11, and 13 to 15.

Post Office Electrical Patents.

MR. STEADMAN (Finsbury, Central): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why, in view of the amount of money expended at the General Factory, Mount Pleasant, in experimenting on electrical condensers and other work, and of the fact that the whole of the work was done at the factory and by the staff generally, some seven patents have been taken out by an officer of the factory on the results of the experiments done, and is he aware that the patents have been let on royalty to a foreign firm who are now manufacturing condensers on the results obtained at Mount Pleasant.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The officer in question has been allowed to take out patents on conditions which amply protect the interests of the Post Office and other Government Departments. I think it is to the public advantage that the inventive faculty of public servants should be encouraged.

Short Time at Holloway Postal Telegraph Factory.

MR. STEADMAN: To ask the Post-master General whether he can offer any explanation as to the cause of the employees at the Holloway postal telegraph factory being placed on short time; and whether orders are still being given to outside manufacturers for telegraph and telephone apparatus which could be produced cheaper at the factory, which has been recently enlarged at a considerable cost.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I regret that it was necessary recently to put some of the hands at Holloway on short time. They have now been placed on full time again, and I am taking such steps as I can to keep the work constant, and to reduce to a minimum both short time and discharges. The factories are now receiving the orders for such apparatus as can be produced there as cheaply as outside, subject of course to the capabilities of the factories.

Grievances of Overseers Class, London Postal Services.

MR. STEADMAN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that representatives of the overseers class, London postal service, have on several occasions asked for a reply to the points raised in their interview with the Postmaster-General in 1903; that since the issue of Lord Stanley's scheme they have been informed that the matter was still under consideration, and that, as recently as November, 1905, they were informed by the Secretary of the Post Office that a reply would be given shortly; and will he explain why these replies were made in view of his statement that an answer was given to most of the points raised in December, 1904, and that the question of their pay was settled when the Stanley scheme came into operation.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Most of the points raised by the memorialists were answered in 1904, but no final answer could at that time be given either to their request for the creation of a body of second class assistant superintendents or in respect of their scale of pay. The consideration of these points and the questions arising out of them was delayed pending the consideration of the Report of the Bradford Committee. The scale of pay was settled by the Stanley revision, but the other remaining points were still not in a condition for settlement. At the present time it is obviously impossible for me, in view of the Select Committee now sitting, to decide the matter, or deal with the further demands they have made. I can only suggest to the memorialists that they should await the result of the Committee's Report, and that if, after I have considered it, they still desire to raise any question on the subject, they should do so.

Belfast Postal Learners' Wages.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General under what circumstances learners, male and female, at Belfast have recently been called upon to say in writing whether or not they are prepared to accept the recent wages concession, and have been warned that any decision in the matter at which they may arrive will be considered final.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The inquiry was addressed to the learners at Belfast in order that it might be ascertained whether they desired to be paid under the new system or under the old until their appointment to the establishment. It is most undesirable that there should be frequent changes in the system of payment as regards individuals, hence the notice that their decision in this respect would be considered final.

Pay of Post Office Adult Night Messengers.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that adult night messengers in Scotland are only paid in some instances 1s. when kept on duty on public holidays; will he issue instructions that at the ensuing King's birthday, and succeeding holidays, these adult messengers shall be paid a full day's wages at the rate at present paid for Bank Holidays in England and Ireland, namely, time and a half.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the scale of pay received by established adult night messengers at Sheffield and Hull; and will he consider the advisability of placing on the establishment the adult night messengers in Scotland who have five years of approved service, as the duties performed by the unestablished night messengers in the Scottish offices are quite as arduous as at the Yorkshire offices named, where the adult night messengers enjoy all the advantages of an established appointment.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will answer the hon. Member's Questions together. A few of the adult night messengers at Sheffield and Hull are on the scale 18s., 1s., 21s. a week. The arrangement is, however, exceptional and, as vacancies occur, unestablished messengers at fixed wages will be employed as at all other offices. Full duty messengers are, in common with other full duty officers, entitled to extra payment at a single rate for duty performed on Bank Holidays or on those holidays in Scotland which correspond to the four Bank Holidays in England and Wales. The King's birthday is not kept as a public holiday at provincial post offices.

Speed of Express Trains.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the report of the inspector of the Board as to the recent accident near Kirtlebridge has yet been received; whether his attention has been called to statements since made that serious risk is caused to express trains to and from Scotland by excessive speed on down grades where there are curves and facing points, and notably to the west coast trains in descending Shap Fell towards Penrith, and also in descending the down grade near Grayrigg to the south; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into this allegation and, if necessary, representations to be made to the company concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Report on the Kirtlebridge accident has not yet been received. Pending its receipt it would be premature to consider the necessity of taking any steps such as are suggested by my hon. friend.

Toll Bars.

MR. ARTHUR STANLEY (Lancashire, Ormskirk): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether a considerable number of tolls are still imposed on roads and bridges in this country; and, if so, whether he will cause a Return to be prepared showing the places where such tolls are imposed and by what authority they are levied.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) Tolls are imposed on a certain number of roads and bridges, but I cannot state the precise number. As regards such a Return as that suggested, there might be some difficulty in obtaining correct information as to the legal authority under which the tolls are levied, and, at all events, the preparation of the Return would involve communication with some 1,800 local bodies. Legislation on the subject of these tolls would not be practicable now, and in all the circumstances it does not seem to be necessary that a Return should be obtained at the present time.

Wages in Royal Dockyards.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what progress has been made in the inquiry as to the wages paid in the Royal Dockyards and those obtaining under trades union rates outside; and how soon he would be able to announce the decision of the Admiralty with regard to the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The inquiry will be completed shortly, and the decision will be made and published as early as possible.

Police Inspectors Soliciting Testimonials on Retirement.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases have been brought to his knowledge since he took office of police inspectors on leaving the force going round their districts and soliciting the publicans in those districts for subscriptions for testimonials on their behalf; and what measures he will take to stop such practices.

(*Answered by Mr. Herbert Samuel.*) No actual cases of this having happened since I took office have been brought to my knowledge, but past experience shows that it is desirable that police authorities should have power to prevent it, and Clause 4 (f) of the Police (Superannuation) Bill, which was drafted for this purpose, has already received the assent of the House.

Irish Poor Law Commission—Representation of Irish Medical Officers.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the Resolutions of the Irish Medical Association urging the importance of appointing an independent Irish medical man to the Poor Law Commission before it comes to investigate complaints as to the position and remuneration of the Irish Poor Law medical officers; and whether it would be possible for him to receive a deputation of the association as to the present condition of the Irish Poor Law Medical service.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Resolutions referred to do not appear to have been forwarded to me, but I beg to refer to the reply given by my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury on a Question on the subject put by the hon. Member for South Down on March 14th.† I am not sure whether the reference to the Royal Commission extends to the grievances of the Irish Poor Law medical officers, but the Commission will doubtless be prepared to receive any statement on the subject which the medical officers may choose to forward, either directly or through me, as they may prefer. In the meantime, it does not appear to be necessary that I should consider the question of receiving the proposed deputation.

Coast Erosion.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Royal Commission on Coast Erosion applies to Ireland; and, if so, whether it will embrace the embankments protecting slob lands on the tidal rivers, such as the Shannon and the Fergus; and, if not, will he explain for what reason.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) It is intended that the Royal Commission should deal with the coasts of the United Kingdom and the banks of tidal rivers.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii, 1233.

Waterford Prison.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that at the present time Waterford prison, in addition to receiving prisoners from the county and city of Waterford, also receives them from Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Queen's County, and the South Riding of Tipperary; whether his attention has been directed to the hardships inflicted on the ratepayers of the county and city of Waterford in having to support patients transferred from the Waterford prison natives of other counties, who remain insane at the expiration of their sentences; and whether he can take any steps to have such patients removed at the expiration of their sentences to the asylums of the districts from which they came.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. Under the Act, 1 and 2 Vic. cap. 27, persons who become insane while in prison are removed to the lunatic asylum of the district in which the prison is situate, and there is no power to transfer such persons on the expiration of their sentence to the asylums of the districts from which they come. There are, I understand, in all the district asylums in Ireland patients who belong primarily to other districts, and matters are therefore substantially equalised. Legislation on the subject would involve the introduction into Ireland of a law of settlement, and I am not at present prepared to say that the Government could undertake such legislation.

Expenses of Auditors of Local Government Board for Scotland.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why, while in the Estimates for the financial year ending March 31st, 1907, provision is made in the Vote for the Local Government Board, Ireland, for £9,944 in respect of the salaries and £3,700 in respect of the travelling expenses of their staff of auditors, of which it is estimated that £6,500 will be recovered from local bodies, there is no similar provision for any outlay out of either Imperial or local funds in the Vote for the more recently constituted Local Government Board for Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The figures as regards Ireland are correctly stated in the Question. The reason why the Estimates of the Local Government Board for Scotland do not contain similar information would appear to be that local authorities in Scotland have to pay the entire cost of audit.

Irish Local Government Expenditure.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state by what sum, and at what rate per cent., the net amount of expenditure examined by the auditors of the Irish Local Government Board has increased or diminished from the amount in the financial year ending March 31st 1897, as compared with 1905, the net amount of expenditure being reckoned as the amount of expenditure which passed under the review of the auditors, excluding money passed to the accounts of other public bodies, and money transferred from one account of a public body to another account of the same public body and set against the expenditure shown and audited in the other account.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Local Government Board are not in a position to give the precise figures asked for having regard to the limited time given by the notice of this Question. The Board, however, estimate the increase in the net amount of expenditure audited to be over £1,500,000, or from 33 to 35 per cent.

Irish Local Government Auditors.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the majority of cases the audits carried out under the Irish Local Government Board are in the hands of men who are without any experience or training or technical qualifications; and that, in return for the services of these officials, each public body is obliged to repay to the Treasury an annual fee, fied by the Local Government Board, without any regard to the volume of work done; and wether, seeing that this fee is usually more than double what would secure an exhaustive examination of the same accounts by a fully qualified public accountant, holding a leading position in his profession, he proposes to takes any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) No person can be appointed an auditor of the Local Government Board in Ireland who is not certified by the Civil Service Commissioners as qualified for the position, after an examination which includes technical qualifications. The volume of work to be done and the time occupied by the auditor are determining factors in arriving at the fee charged for the audit of the accounts of public bodies. The Local Government Board have no definite information as to any scale which might regulate the charges likely to be made by qualified public accountants; but the board are satisfied that their audit fees are not excessive, and that they would compare favourably with the fees which would be charged for similar work by such accountants.

Army Pensions.

Mr. A. L. LEVER (Essex, Harwich): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the number of officers under forty-five years of age who, under voluntary retirement, are receiving pensions, the amount of the respective pensions, and the total sum of all such pensions for the last financial year; and the number of officers under forty-five years of age who, under compulsory retirement, are receiving pensions or half-pay, the amount of the respective pensions or half-pay allowances, and the total sum of all such pensions or half-pay allowances for the last financial year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Officers under forty-five years of age who are in receipt of non-effective pay. Officers of the Regular Army. Voluntary retirement to retired pay:—

Number.	Annual Value of Pensions.	Approximate Charge during 1905-6.
	£	£
509	81,635	78,000

Compulsory retirement:—

(1) To retired pay (on account of permanent ill-health, etc.):—

Number.	Annual Value of Pensions.	Approximate Charge during 1905-6.
	£	£
71	8,940	8,500

(2) To half-pay (temporary, on account of ill-health, etc.):—

Number.	Annual Value of Pensions.	Approximate Charge during 1905-6.
	£	£
131	15,636	15,500

Officers of the Militia, Imperial Yeomanry, Volunteers, and Colonial (Irregular) Forces granted retired pay on account of ill-health due to service in the late South African War.

Number.	Annual Value of Pensions.	Approximate Charge during 1905-6.
	£	£
89	6,844	6,500

Reduced Railway Fares for Soldiers in Mufti.

Mr. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether having regard to the fact that railway companies invariably refuse cheapened tickets to private soldiers and non-commissioned officers when out of uniform, and thereby make largely useless the lately granted privileges of wearing plain clothes when on leave, he will consider the desirability of bringing pressure to bear upon them to accept a written form or metal disc as proof of being in His Majesty's service; and whether, in default of securing such a reform by arrangement, he will support amendments to future railway Bills making the acceptance of some such evidence by railway companies compulsory.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It must be remembered that the fact that non-commissioned officers and soldiers travel at reduced rates when proceeding on furlough and leave is due to a concession on the part of the railway companies, and this concession has been of great value to the bulk of the Army. Renewed efforts will, however, be made to induce the railway companies to permit the use of cheapened tickets to non-commissioned officers and private soldiers when out of uniform. I am not prepared to endeavour to secure the concession by the means suggested in the last part of the Question.

Discharges of Royal Engineers Civil Staff at Salisbury.

MR. RENDALL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware of the treatment accorded to certain members of the Royal Engineers civil staff at Salisbury who were transferred from the late Military Works Loan Staff at Tidworth to the Barrack Construction Branch at the War Office, but were led to decline the latter appointments owing to offers made them by the Royal Engineers authorities in the southern command in May last and accepted by them under an implication of equal tenure; and whether he is aware that these gentlemen have been recently discharged, notwithstanding the circumstances attending their engagement; and whether, in view of their removal of residence in accordance with orders, and their simultaneous discharge, it is proposed to award them any compensation for the losses they have sustained under the peculiar circumstances attending their cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) When the Military Loan Works at Tidworth were handed over to the Barrack Construction Department in March, 1905, the members of the Royal Engineers civil staff mentioned were offered appointments by the Director of Barrack Construction. As, however, there appeared at the time a reasonable probability of their services being required for some time to come under the Royal Engineers they elected to remain under the Royal Engineers. Subsequently it was decided to reduce the staff, and, as there were no available vacancies, these gentlemen were discharged in February, 1906. Their names have been noted for re-employment should an opportunity arise. As regards the question of compensation for losses stated to have been incurred by reason of change of residence, this matter is now under investigation.

St. Helena Garrison.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War what opportunity he proposes to give the House for raising the question of the removal of the garrison from the island of St. Helena.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The hon. Member can raise the question on the Vote for my salary, but I cannot at present forecast the date on which this will be taken.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Gunnery.

MAJOR RENTON (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many seamen and how many marines competed in the gunlayers' tests and battle practice for heavy guns in 1905; and how many seamen and marines, respectively, were in the first hundred on the list.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The following are the numbers of seamen and marine gunlayers respectively, who competed at the gunlayers' test of 1905, with heavy guns of 6-inch calibre, which are the only heavy guns having a sufficient proportion of marine gunlayers to allow of any comparison being established: 6-inch Breech Loading.—Number of men who competed—Seamen, 400; marines, 121. First 100 men on the list—Seamen, 75; marines, 25. 6-inch Quick Firing.—Number of men who competed—Seamen, 176; marines 51. First 100 men on the list—Seamen, 78; marines, 22. As regards the battle practice, no comparison is possible, as the hits from the ship as a whole are counted, and no distinction is possible between the hits from different guns.

Examinations for Naval Cadetships.

MR. GODFREY BARING (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it has been the custom to publish the examination papers set to candidates for naval cadetships under the old system of entry as well as the marks obtained; whether the same information is afforded in the case of cadets entering under the new system; and, if this is not the case, will he state the reasons for the new procedure.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The examination papers set to candidates under the old system of entry, and the marks obtained, were published by the Civil Service Commission, who conducted the examination. The papers set to candidates under the new system are published by the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board. There are no marks published under the new system of entry, the examination being a qualifying one only

Disposal of Obsolete War Ships.

MR. JENKINS (Chatham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the number of ships recently sold by public auction at Chatham; the date when they were built and the cost of each ship; the names of the persons to whom they were sold; and the amount realised in each case.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The particulars asked for, with the exception of the purchasers' names, have already been given in reply to a Question by the hon. Member for the Kennington Division of Lambeth on April 9th†. I am sending the hon. Member a copy of this reply, to which has been added the further information desired.

Ships' Canteens.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that in the case of seven of His Majesty's ships stationed in English waters the contract for the supply of the canteen is held by Maltese firms; will he say why no English firm has in these cases had accepted a tender for the supply of provisions which are mainly English; is he aware that the canteen provisions for these ships are supplied by English firms to the Maltese firms whose tenders have been accepted; will he state the terms and prices of the successful tender of the canteen of H.M.S. "Prince George" and the terms and prices of the tenders put in by English firms for the same canteen; and is he aware that in several of these ships margarine of a quality which can be bought ashore at from 6d. to 8d. per pound is now being sold to the ship's company under the name of butter at 1s. 2d. per pound.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The contracts made by canteens, and the prices at which articles are sold, are not matters which come under the control of the Admiralty, and consequently there is no information available upon the points referred to. The Admiralty lays down certain general principles upon which canteens may be established in His Majesty's ships, but the actual details of management are conducted by the Canteen Committee, with the reservation that the selection of the tradesmen with whom the canteen deals is to be approved by the captain.

Vaccine for the Army and Navy.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what quantity of glycerinated calf lymph was produced at the Army and Navy Vaccine Institute last year; the number of tubes used during the year at military stations; were any of the tubes sold; and, if so, to whom.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 969.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): The quantity produced was sufficient for 107,766 vaccinations. The number of tubes used during the year at military stations was 67,685. No lymph produced at this establishment is sold.

MR. WEIR: Is it proposed to use the lymph which has become stale, or is it to be destroyed?

MR. HALDANE: I have no reason to think it is as the hon. Member suggests, but I will inquire.

MR. WEIR: I hope you will not continue producing a large surplus every year at heavy cost to the taxpayers.

Payment of Army Pensions.

MR. ESSEX (Gloucestershire, Cirencester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can arrange for weekly or fortnightly payment of pensions to Army reservists and time expired soldiers, in place of the present system of quarterly payments.

MR. HALDANE: The whole question of the mode of payment of Army pensions and reserve pay is now receiving careful consideration.

Sparkbrook Factory.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether eighty workpeople have already been discharged from the Royal Small Arms Factory at Sparkbrook, and whether the factory is about to be closed and the remainder of the workpeople discharged; and, if this is so, why it is that the stipulation which was said to have been made on the sale of the premises namely, that the factory should be kept open and the services of the workpeople retained, has not been complied with.

MR. HALDANE: Seventy-seven men were discharged on Thursday last. These were men formerly employed on repairs who cannot be transferred to manufacture. Eighty-four men have been transferred from employment on repairs to manufacture at Sparkbrook, and twenty-eight to Enfield. This factory is not about to be closed, and it is not anticipated that there will be further discharges.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE: Will there be any opportunity of finding employment for the men who have been discharged?

MR. HALDANE: I cannot give any pledge, but I hope the orders given will enable it to be done.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE: When is the factory likely to be reopened?

MR. HALDANE: As soon as possible. I cannot give the date, but it is being pushed on.

History of the South African War.

*MR. T. HART DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what progress has been made with the official history of the late South African War; when it is expected that any portion of it will be issued; and what are the causes which have led to the delay in publishing it.

MR. HALDANE: Considerable progress has been made with this work. The first volume will probably be out by midsummer, and it is expected that the second and third volumes will be out about the end of the year, and the concluding volume in 1907. I have pushed the matter on. Accordingly, the hope held out to the House in 1904† that the book would be completed within three years time will thus, as far as can be foreseen, be realised.

Debates on War Office Votes.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what were the last occasions on which the Votes for the War Office, military education, and ordnance factories were discussed in the House or in Committee.

MR. HALDANE: It is regretted that by inadvertence the figures given to my hon. friend in reply to his Question of April 27th‡ were those for the votes actually closured *en bloc* at the end of the sessions concerned, although some of them had been discussed on previous dates. I will see that a correct reply to the Question is circulated. The War Office Vote was last separately discussed in 1905, the Military Education Vote in 1902, and the Ordnance Factories Vote in 1901.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxiii., 77.

‡ See Col. 131.

Irish Yeomanry.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the powers and duties of Yeomanry in Ireland were taken over either by Her late Majesty or His present Majesty, in pursuance of the 6th Section of the Regulation of the Forces Act, 1871; and, if so, whether he can give the date of the Order in Council so doing.

MR. HALDANE: Yes, Sir. The powers were taken over by Her late Majesty and the date of the Order in Council was February 5th, 1872.

British Indians in South Africa.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to a memorial addressed by the Natal Indian Congress in March last to the Colonial Secretary, Maritzburg, protesting against the imposition of prohibitive fees and passes issued under the Immigration Restrictions Act; and whether he will take steps to remove the grievances of which British Indians resident in South Africa complain in this matter.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The Secretary of State has seen a copy of the memorial referred to as printed in a Natal newspaper. The Secretary of State will ascertain from the Governor of Natal what answer was sent by the Colonial Secretary of Natal to the memorial, in reply to the contention that the fees were not reasonable. The Act provides for charging reasonable fees by regulation.

Case of Mr. Abu Bakir Ahmed, of Pretoria.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to a decision of the Supreme Court in the Transvaal, in March last, in which it was decided that, under the operation of Act 3 of 1885, the heirs of Mr. Abu Bakir Ahmed, who have been in possession of valuable property in Pretoria for a period of fifteen years, have no title to that property and have therefore been deprived of their interest in it, and to the recorded opinion of the Court that the law was harsh, but that the judges could only interpret it, and that it was for the Legislature to interfere; and whether, having regard to the racial provisions of this statute, which have always been objected to by the British Government, His Majesty's Ministers will now take steps to ensure the repeal of this Act.

MR. CHURCHILL: My attention has been drawn to a newspaper report of the case referred to. Lord Elgin is in communication with the Governor on the subject.

Repatriation of Chinese Coolies.

MR. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the number of Chinese coolies who have been repatriated at the expense of the Imperial Funds.

MR. CHURCHILL: From the Answer which I gave to the hon. Member for the Newbury Division of Berkshire on the 26th†, the hon. Member will understand that no coolies have yet been repatriated at the expense of Imperial funds.

MR. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can now state when the Chinese coolies in South Africa will be informed that they are at liberty to demand repatriation.

MR. CHURCHILL: I fully appreciate the motive of the hon. Member's anxiety upon this subject; but I can only refer him to my Answer to the hon. Member for the Newbury Division of Berks on Thursday last† and to the conversation which followed upon it.

MR. LANE-FOX: Is it right for the hon. Gentleman to impute motives?

[No Answer was returned.]

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† See Col. 21-23.

Natal Government and the Native Rising.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government of Natal have expressed their determination to cope with the native rising in that colony without calling in the aid of Imperial troops.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have seen the reports in the Press telegrams from South Africa of statements to this effect made by Mr. Smythe, the Prime Minister, and Mr. Maydon.

The Imperial Government and the Natal Rising.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in the event of Imperial troops being employed in connection with the native rising in Natal, His Majesty's Government would hold themselves justified in claiming, in consequence of such employment, a greater share in any settlement of the native question in that colony.

MR. CHURCHILL: The interest of the Imperial Government in, and its responsibility for, the welfare of the native population in Natal is not wholly dependent upon the employment of Imperial troops; but that responsibility would, undoubtedly, become more intimate and direct in proportion as Imperial forces were employed. Should the situation in Natal undergo changes in the direction indicated by my hon. friend, the Secretary of State is confident that the Imperial Government and the Responsible Government of Natal would continue to work together in friendly co-operation; and he believes that it is by the promotion of that friendly co-operation that the welfare of the native subjects of the King may best be secured, both during the present period of tension and at its close.

India and the Opium Traffic.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can state the value of the opium exported from India last year, what proportion went to China, and what revenue the Government of India derived from the trade.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): The total value of the opium exported from India in 1904–5 was £7,082,295, of which opium to the value of £5,541,040 was consigned direct to ports in China. The net opium revenue of India in the same year amounted to £4,050,999. This includes revenue from opium consumed in India or consigned to other than ports in China. That portion of the revenue which is derived from opium exported direct to China may be estimated at about £3,000,000.

Orders for Indian Railway Material.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the fact that for many years past dissatisfaction has been caused by reasons of orders for mounted wheels and axles and loose tyres and axles for the Indian State and other railways being given to Continental makers; and whether he is prepared to take steps to ensure that future orders may be placed with British manufacturers.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I am not aware of the feeling of dissatisfaction to which the hon. Member refers. As regards purchases for the Indian State railways, orders for wheels, axles and tyres are, as a rule, given to foreign makers only when British prices are comparatively high, or when a sufficiently quick rate of delivery cannot be obtained in this country. Every case is carefully considered on its merits, and due regard is paid to possible differences in the qualities of British and foreign workmanship respectively, the result being that the great bulk of Government orders for goods of this description is placed in this country. To this practice I propose to adhere. For Indian railways other than the State railways, orders are given not by the Secretary of State in Council but by the companies who manage them.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS: Will British manufacturers who tender in future have a fair opportunity of getting orders?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I will inquire if there is any reason to suppose that the tenders are not decided on their merits.

Partition of Bengal.

MR. C. J. O'DONNELL (Newington, Walworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that fifty-four large public meetings to protest against the partition of Bengal were held in the month of March, and if he will state what has been done to allay the unrest in that province.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I am not sure of the exact number, but I understand that many such meetings have been held. No special measures are being taken, so far as I am aware, for the purpose mentioned in the Question, nor, as I am advised, do such measures seem to be demanded.

Serajgunge Criminal Courts.

MR. C. J. O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether thirty-four complaints were recently made in the criminal courts of Serajgunge against the military police, inquiry being refused in all by the local magistracy; and, seeing that the High Court at Calcutta on appeal in one of them, a test case, ordered a judicial inquiry, whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I have no information as to the details stated in the Question, but I gather from it that the High Court have already ordered an inquiry in a case where it was refused, and it would appear that persons considering themselves aggrieved can similarly apply to that Court, and that no action on my part is required.

Chinese in South Africa.

LORD TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any official information showing that facsimiles of the cartoons depicting Chinamen in chains, issued in this country during the General Election, have been widely circulated in China, and have inflamed the lower class Chinese against this country.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury, for Sir EDWARD GREY): The information which I have received is to the effect that some agitation was aroused in China by criticisms of the Transvaal Labour Ordinance in 1904, but that it has since died away.

Income-Tax Collection.

LORD CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that persons liable to income-tax are often subject to demands for payment from two or three surveyors of taxes; that such demands are sometimes accompanied by threats of prosecution for recovery of tax already paid; and whether he will endeavour to secure that the levying of income-tax shall be made as little vexatious as possible, more especially to the struggling professional and trading classes.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): That the same taxpayer should in some cases receive demands for income-tax from two or more different surveyors is a necessary incident of the system of collection of income-tax at the source, but every effort is made to render the collection as little vexatious as possible.

Patent Spirit.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that patent spirit, made in London, is blended in bond with pot-still whisky, supplied to tied houses, and sold to the public as genuine Irish and Scotch whisky; and what steps he proposes to take to protect the public against such frauds.

MR. ASQUITH: I have no official information on the subject, as the Excise Duty Acts do not discriminate between patent-still and pot-still spirits. The functions of my Department in the matter are confined to the protection of the revenue, and, as the rate of duty upon the two kinds of spirit is the same, the officials of the Inland Revenue Department have no authority to concern themselves in the matter.

Irish Education.

MR. HUGH BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, seeing that the additional demands upon Imperial funds caused by the proposals in the new Education Bill are estimated at £750,000 per annum, he is prepared to include in his Estimates a proportional additional grant for educational purposes in Ireland.

MR. ASQUITH: As the financial arrangements under the Education Bill will not come into force during this financial year, I consider it would be premature to come to any decision on the question raised by the hon. Member.

Pay of Customs Preventive Men.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that the concession of an enhanced increment of 1s. 6d. per week, per annum, given to Customs preventive men, as from the 1st October, 1905, does not, according to the interpretation which the Board of Customs placed on that concession, take effect until the 1st October, 1906; that, as a result of the re-assessment of salaries last October, many of the officers referred to received less salary this year than they would have done had there been no concession; and if he will take such steps to give the full intended benefit of the concession.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): In the Civil Service an annual increment accrues during the year in respect of which it is earned, but is not payable until that year has expired. The increments in question began to be earned as from the 1st October, 1905, but will not be payable until they are fully earned by a year of service, viz., on the 1st October, 1906. It is not the case that as a result of the re-assessment of salaries last October many of the officers referred to will receive less salary this year than they would have done had there been no concession.

French Labour Disputes.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): On behalf of the hon. Member for Central Sheffield, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can obtain through the Foreign Office a report concerning the industrial disturbances now prevailing in the department of France adjoining the Straits of Dover, and particularly as to instances of the destruction of the houses and property of workmen and personal assaults upon them, leading to deaths, to persuade them to abstain from working.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.). I have conferred with my right hon. friend the Foreign Secretary with regard to this request. In his opinion, with which I entirely concur, it is not desirable to make the industrial disturbances referred to the subject of a special report for publication by his office. The accounts which are being published in the daily Press appear to contain very full information.

Pay of Prison Warders.

*MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the difference in pay existing in the subordinate ranks of officers employed in His Majesty's local and convict prisons; can he, in view of the fact that the responsibilities have been equalised by reason of convicts not only being located in local prisons but in those cases where the convict is sentenced to penal servitude the term of separate confinement has to be passed there, give to the officers of local prisons the same annual increment and maximum salary as officers in convict prisons.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Convicts have been kept in local prisons for their term of separate confinement for the last nineteen years, and the recent decision to send certain selected convicts to local prisons after the term of their separate confinement is completed would offer no sufficient justification for an increase of pay. It affects only three prisons, and the convicts, being carefully selected men of good behaviour, throw no special responsibility on the warders. The petitions from prison officers which are now being received will be given careful consideration, but any general increase of pay would involve a very serious additional charge on the Prison Vote.

Alleged Wrongful Arrests by London Policemen.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will appoint a Departmental Committee to inquire into recent unjustifiable arrests by the Metropolitan Police, and especially of Messrs. Gerothwold and Lavalette; whether he has received any reports on the subjects of these arrests; and whether he will lay the same upon the Table of the House.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I do not think the question whether these arrests were justifiable or not can be properly dealt with by a Departmental Committee, which could not take evidence on oath. The charges brought against certain officers of the Metropolitan Police and strongly denied by them raise a clear issue, which can only be disposed of satisfactorily by a court of law; and if Dr. Gerothwold and Mr. Lavalette desire to take proceedings, no obstacle will be put in their way by the police authorities. The reports I have received are confidential, and could not be published without prejudice to the parties in any proceedings that may be taken.

LORD R. CECIL: Will the right hon. Gentleman state what remedy he suggests is open to these gentlemen?

*MR. GLADSTONE: I am sure the noble Lord is much better able to say than I am. Proceedings can be taken for wrongful arrest.

Erection of Lighthouse and Fog Signal on the Island of Rona.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state whether the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners have yet decided to establish a light and fog signal on the Island of Rona, thirty-nine miles north-east of the Butt of Lewis.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I am informed by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses that they have not yet decided to propose the erection of a lighthouse and fog signal station on north Rona, and that in view of the heavy cost which its establishment and maintenance would involve, and the more pressing claims of other schemes, it is unlikely that the erection of the station referred to will be proceeded with in the near future.

Shipwrecks in Belfast Lough.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the number of shipwrecks and strandings that have taken place during the last ten years on the Irish coast from Belfast Lough Copeland Lights on Mew Island to Carlingford Lough.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The number of vessels which have stranded between the entrances of Belfast Lough, Grey Point, and Carlingford Lough, Cranfield Point, during the last ten years is 179, of which thirty-one became total wrecks and 148 were more or less damaged. Only two of the strandings were attended with loss of life, the number of lives lost being five.

East London Water Supply.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the quality of the drinking water supplied to London, and particularly to the fact that the inhabitants of East London are daily drinking, as water, some 2,000,000 gallons of sewage effluent; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): My attention has been called to this subject. I am aware that it is desirable that further steps should be taken to safeguard the supply of water from the Lee from the possibility of contamination. The Metropolitan Water Board included in a Bill promoted by them this session proposals with this object, but they have, as I understand, withdrawn this part of the Bill, and I am in communication with them in relation to the matter. I may, however, state that I learn from the Water Examiner that the water supplied in the East London District during the past winter (consisting mainly of filtered Lee water) was clear and of good quality.

Distress Committees.

Mr. J. WARD (Stoke on-Trent): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has any information as to the towns that have established distress committees under the Unemployed Workmen's Act of 1905; and whether he will give a list of such towns and the sum expended by distress committees upon actual work done by unemployed workmen up to the 30th March, 1906.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: There are seventy-five municipal boroughs and urban districts for each of which a distress committee is required to be established by the Act, and to these fourteen boroughs and urban districts have been added by the Local Government Board on the application of the local authorities concerned. I will send my hon. friend a complete list of the places. I am not at present able to state the sum expended by the committees on work, but I hope to obtain information on the subject in due course.

Fees for Re-Addressing Telegrams.

Mr. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General what is the fee charged for having telegrams which have been addressed to business offices delivered at the private houses of the recipients after business hours; and whether he can see his way to reduce it in favour of persons only receiving a limited number of telegrams.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The fee is one guinea a year in addition to the ordinary redirection charge. The registration of special instructions for the treatment of particular telegrams leads to much additional trouble, whether the telegrams be many or few, and tends to retard the service; and I am afraid, therefore, that I do not see my way to reduce the fee.

Manchester Post Office and the Halfpenny Packet Post.

Mr. BRIDGEMAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received complaints as to the manner in which the postal officials at Manchester now interpret the rule with regard to the halfpenny packet post; whether, in view of the fact that figures may be corrected in writing, it is an entirely new interpretation to exclude circulars in which figures are inserted in writing; and if he will give general instructions to postal officials to put the wider construction on the rules in future.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: Under the regulations a printer's error may be corrected in manuscript in a circular sent by the halfpenny post, but they do not permit the insertion in manuscript in such circulars of any figures other than those indicating the date of despatch of the circular, the date of a meeting or appointment, and index or reference numbers. But I am inquiring into the whole question.

Post Office Mail Contracts—Treatment of Horses.

Mr. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, pending inquiries with reference to the general conditions under which Post Office contractors' work is carried on, he will take steps to insure that horses driven in mail vans should not be worked for fourteen hours in any one day.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The horses referred to in the hon. Member's previous Question only work on alternate days; and, although they are then out of their stalls for fourteen hours, they are during that time actually travelling for less than six hours. The condition of the contractor's horses is reported as satisfactory, and his stud is kept under official supervision.

Private Letter Bags and Boxes.

Mr. HAY MORGAN (Cornwall, Truro): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that in consequence of the increased charge for letter bags and boxes many subscribers have ceased to use letter bags and boxes altogether; and whether he can inform the House what is the number of those who have ceased to subscribe for letter bags and boxes since the increased charge came into force.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The number of renters of private boxes has somewhat decreased since the revised charges came into force, but I am not at present in a position to give a return of the number of boxes which have been given up. No increase has been made in the fees for private bags. Perhaps I may point out to my hon. friend that the reason why my predecessor increased the charge for private boxes was that the previous fee did not cover the additional cost incurred. It is a fallacy to suppose that these private bags and boxes are an advantage to the Post Office. On the contrary, they add appreciably to the complexity of the sorting.

Mr. W. Taverner's Pension Trust Scheme.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he has granted, or intends to grant, special facilities to Mr. William Taverner, the controller of a national old age pension trust, to assist him in his scheme, whether by way of cashing pension warrants at post offices or otherwise.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am glad to have the opportunity of stating that neither my predecessor nor I have granted, nor do I intend to grant, special facilities to Mr. William Taverner, the controller of a national old age pension trust, to assist him in his scheme, whether by way of cashing pension warrants at post offices or otherwise.

Crown and Sub-Post Offices.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will grant a Return of the Crown post offices in London, showing the location of each and the amount of business transacted by each during the last completed year of which he has record; and if he will state the amount of business transacted during the corresponding period by the sub-post offices in Brixton.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I find that the preparation of such a Return will involve considerable trouble and expense, and I do not see that any really useful purpose will be served by it.

Religious Instruction in Elementary Schools.

LORD R. CECIL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the syllabuses of religious instruction issued by the local education authorities in England and Wales.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I understand that a Parliamentary Return is to be moved for in another place giving the syllabuses of religious instruction adopted by all local education authorities in England and Wales. The Government will be glad to grant such a Return, and I will take steps to obtain it and lay it before Parliament with the least possible delay.

MR. ADKINS (Lancashire, Middleton) asked whether the Government would take steps also to obtain the syllabuses of religious instruction issued by diocesan authorities of the Church of England for use in non-provided schools.

MR. BIRRELL replied that the information would be as complete as possible. If he could obtain that information he would endeavour to do so.

MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS (Carmarthen District): Will the right hon. Gentleman endeavour also to find out in how many schools in this country there is no religious instruction of any kind given?

MR. BIRRELL: I hope that will be the result of these inquiries.

The Apostles Creed.

LORD R. CECIL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the Education Department has ruled that the Apostles Creed is or is not a religious formulary distinctive of a particular denomination within the meaning of Section 14 of the Education Act, 1870.

I beg further to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in the opinion of the Education Department, the teaching that can be given under Section 14 (2) of The Education Act, 1870, is confined to the ethical, literary, and historical use of the Bible.

MR. BIRRELL: The Board have no jurisdiction to determine these or any other questions under Section 14 of the Act of 1870. My own opinion, however, which is purely personal, is that the reply to both Questions is in the negative. The noble Member may be interested to learn that the question of the legality of the inclusion of the Apostles Creed in a board school syllabus was submitted to the Department some years ago under the jurisdiction then possessed under Section 16 of the Act of 1870, which has since been repealed. The Department then decided that the inclusion of the Apostles Creed was legal.

Return of Certificated Teachers.

MR. LLEWLYN WILLIAMS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state the number of certificated teachers engaged at the close of the last completed statistical year in Council, Church, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Jewish, and British, and other undenominational schools, respectively, in Wales and Monmouthshire.

MR. BIRRELL: The information asked for can only be obtained by the expenditure of much labour, which would hardly be compensated for by the value of the results obtained.

Children on School Rolls.

MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state the number of children enrolled, at the close of the last completed statistical year, in Council, Church, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Jewish, and British, and other undenominational schools, respectively, in Wales and Monmouthshire.

MR. BIRRELL: The numbers for the statistical year ending June 31st, 1905, are:—Council, 307,698; Church, 92,480; Roman Catholic, 14,138; Wesleyan, 704; Jewish, nil; British and other undenominational, 6,227.

School Departments.

MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state the number of separate school departments under head teachers in existence at the close of the last completed statistical year, classified as Council, Church, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Jewish, and British, and other undenominational school departments respectively, in Wales and Monmouthshire.

MR. BIRRELL: The numbers for the statistical year ending July 31st, 1905, are:—Council, 1,543; Church, 830; Roman Catholic, 80; Wesleyan, 3; Jewish, nil; British and other undenominational, 61.

Clause 4 of the Education Bill.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he can state what are the approximate numbers of voluntary schools which could be affected by the provisions of Clause 4 of the Education Bill, 1906, giving separate figures for the various denominations; and what are the approximate percentages of the respective totals of the various denominational schools to which the special facilities, provided in Clause 4, could be applied.

MR. BIRRELL: I will let the hon. Member have, I hope by the end of the week, the number of voluntary schools of different denominations at present existing in urban districts with a population of over 5,000, but it is quite impossible for me to say in how many of these cases parents of four fifths of the children are likely to desire extended facilities. Still less can it be stated in how many cases other accommodation is available for the children whose parents do not desire these facilities, as required in Section 4 (2) of the Bill.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the National Education Association have made a calculation from the latest Blue-books, and has he any reason to suppose the figures published by them are incorrect? The right hon. Gentleman appears to have misunderstood my Question.

MR. BIRRELL: I cannot make myself responsible for those figures.

The Zoological Gardens.

MR. SEAVERNS: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he has recently authorised a further lease of land to the Zoological Gardens; what is the period for which the lease is given, what the acreage, and what the annual rental.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): No new lease of land has been made to the Zoological Gardens. A licence for the user of a few yards of land on the banks of the canal has been granted to the society in order to afford access for visitors to the Gardens to the new bridge which is being built, for the convenience of the public mainly, at the expense of the Zoological Society. The new bridge will be double the present width; half will be used by the Zoological Society and the other half as a public footway as at present from Regent's Park to Primrose Hill.

MR. SEAVERNS: What rent is paid for this land? And is the use of it confined to the purposes indicated in the reply of the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. HARCOURT: No rent is paid. The object is to give the Society access to a bridge of which they are paying nearly the whole cost.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): Have the Board any power of control over the pathways from the Gardens to the bridge. On Easter Monday——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Notice should be given of these details.

MR. J. WARD asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could use his influence to procure a reasonable tariff for refreshments served to the public in the Gardens in holiday times.

MR. HARCOURT said he had no control over the tariff charges.

Ecclesiastical Commissioners' Estates.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for East Bristol, as Church Estates Commissioner, how many applications have been made to the Ecclesiastical Commissioner by lessees for their leave to sell wine, beer, and spirits in each of the years 1890–1905, both inclusive; and in how many cases in each of these years the application has been granted.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): The number of such applications would not exceed six in any one year, and the number granted would be less, but I have no means of ascertaining the respective numbers without a laborious search through the papers of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, for which there appears to be no sufficient reason.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the hon. Member for East Bristol, as Church Estates Commissioner, how many of the places upon the estates of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, which were licensed during 1905 for the sale of beer, wine, or spirits, have been leased from the Commissioners since 1889, and in how many cases the lease will expire within the next five years.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: The Ecclesiastical Commissioners know of no licence granted in respect of any place upon their estates during the year 1905.

Attorney-General's Fiat for Criminal Prosecution.

MR. DICKINSON (St. Pancras, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General if he will state the several Acts of Parliament under which the right of any private individual in England to institute criminal proceedings is limited by the requirement that the fiat of the Attorney-General shall be first obtained, and the number of occasions upon which, since the passing of each Act, application has been made thereunder for such fiat, and the number of times that such fiat has been granted and refused.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields): The Attorney-General's fiat is required under the following Acts of Parliament:—Vexatious Indictments Acts, 1859; Law of Property Amendment Acts, 1859 and 1860; Larceny Act, 1861; Newspapers, Printers, etc., Act, 1869; Larceny (Advertisements) Act, 1870; Explosive Substances Act, 1883; Official Secrets Act, 1889; Public Bodies (Corrupt Practices) Act, 1889; Money Lenders Act, 1900. It is not possible to give statistics relative to all the applications under the earlier Acts, but the numbers for the last twenty years are as follows:—Larceny Act, 1861: 159 granted, 21 refused, total 180; Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act, 1889: 30 granted, 6 refused, total, 36; Newspapers, Printers, etc., Act, 1869: 5 granted, 12 refused, total 17; Larceny (Advertisements) Act, 1870: 7 granted, 6 refused, total 13; Explosive Substances Act, 1883: 5 granted, 5 refused, total 10; Vexatious Indictments Act, 1859: 5 granted, 3 refused, total 8; Law of Property Amendment Acts, 1859 and 1860: 2 granted, 5 refused, total 7; Money Lenders Act, 1900: 4 granted, total 4; Official Secrets Act, 1889: 3 granted, total 3. The fiat of the Attorney-General was formerly required under the Public Health Act 1875, and the Public Health (Members and Officers) Act 1885 for certain of the offences now covered by the Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act 1889, and under these Acts, 10 applications were granted and 11 refused, total 21.

MR. J. HENDERSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether it is the intention of the Government to reintroduce the Bill to amend The Married Women's Property Act, 1882, which was brought from the Lords on April 4th, 1905 as well as in the previous session of Parliament, with a view to its being passed into law this session.

SIR W. ROBSON: The substance of the Bill of last session is contained in Lord Davey's Bill which has already been read a second time in the House of Lords.

Mr. Rider Haggard's Report.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Report of Lord Tennyson's Committee upon Mr. Rider Haggard's Report on the Salvation Army's Agricultural Colonies in Canada, the United States, and at Hadleigh, in Essex, will be printed.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have reason to believe that the Report in question will very shortly be presented to the Secretary of State. It will be thereupon laid before Parliament.

Protection of Scottish Fisheries.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the names of the Admiralty cruisers placed at the disposal of the Fishery Board for Scotland for sea police service, and what districts they patrol.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The names of the Admiralty cruisers placed at the disposal of the Fishery Board for Scotland for sea police service are His Majesty Ship "Ringdove" and His Majesty's Ship "Daisy," and the areas patrolled by them are the Moray Firth and Loch Fyne respectively.

Scottish Registration Anomalies.

SIR J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is is aware that every year many voters in the counties of Roxburgh and Berwick have their names removed from the register of voters because they have settled in a neighbouring county to work at a different farm or under a different employer in the ordinary work of their calling; and whether he will consider the propriety of removing the disqualification so arising under the present law in Scotland.

Mr. SINCLAIR: Such points, which affect the whole country, will no doubt be considered with any general reform of the present franchise and registration law, and they are under the observation of the Government.

The Convention of Burghs and Royal Proclamations.

Sir J. JARDINE: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is now in a position to state if the request of the Convention of Burghs anent the proclamation of the accession of Sovereigns will be granted.

Mr. SINCLAIR: No, Sir. I regret to say that it has been found impossible to reconcile conflicting opinions and claims. I hope to arrive at a decision after personal conference during the autumn recess or whenever there is opportunity; and I shall be obliged if the hon. Gentleman and other hon. Members interested will allow the matter to stand over accordingly.

Scottish Education Board.

Mr. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state how often the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland have met since their appointment was gazetted on February 16th.

Mr. SINCLAIR: It is contrary to precedent and practice to give such particulars as to meetings of any Committee of the Privy Council.

Mr. GULLAND: May I ask if their Lordships ever meet at all?

[No Answer was returned.]

Scottish Education Grant.

Sir HENRY CRAIK (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he has represented to the Treasury the claim which will arise for Scotland in view of the additional annual grant proposed for England and Wales under the Education Bill; and whether that claim has been admitted.

Mr. SINCLAIR: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has already stated, in Answer to a Question in the House, that a decision on the question of giving an equivalent grant for Scotland would be premature, but due representation will be made to the Treasury as to the claims and needs of Scotland as occasion arises.

Scottish School Finance.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state whether, in considering questions of school finance, there is any reason why the financial year should not in all cases be identical and terminate on March 31st in each year.

Mr. SINCLAIR: The financial year of school boards is identical in all cases and ends at May 15th, the date to which the accounts of all other local authorities in Scotland are made up, which date could not be departed from without causing grave inconvenience.

American Paupers in Irish Workhouses.

Mr. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a widow named Delia Turner, who had resided for thirty-four years in America, became partially paralysed and was admitted to the Tucksbury State Hospital, Boston; that she was placed on board a vessel by the authorities and her passage paid to Athlone, her native town, without consulting her wishes in the matter; that she has been admitted to this workhouse and is now a charge upon the rates; and whether, seeing that she is anxious to go back to America, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Local Government Board have ascertained from the clerk of the Athlone Union that, according to the information supplied to the Guardians by Mrs. Turner herself, the facts are as stated in the Question. Mrs. Turner is now in the Athlone workhouse and is a charge upon the rates. Having regard to the United States immigration laws which forbid the entrance of persons unable to provide for themselves, I do not see that any steps can be taken for sending Mrs. Turner back to the United States. The general question of the deportation of paupers and lunatics from the United States to this country is, however, receiving the consideration of the Government.

Irish Land—Estates Commissioners' Staff.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, now that further funds have been made available for carrying out sales under The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1903, it is intended promptly to appoint more examiners of title and examining clerks in the offices of the Estates Commissioners, as the present staff is inadequate to deal with the work, and the delays are retarding land purchase and are very injurious to the tenant purchasers as well as the vendors; and if the President of the Land Commission has recommended further appointments of examiners.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that the question of the sufficiency of the existing staff of examiners and examiners' clerks is at present engaging the earnest attention of the Commissioners.

Fermanagh Land Commission Appeals.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many Land Commission appeals from the county of Fermanagh are at present pending; and whether, in view of the number that have been pending over two years, arrangements will be made to have them shortly disposed of.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that appeals are pending in eighty-eight cases in county Fermanagh. The last hearing of appeals in that county took place in January last, when the list for hearing comprised all cases in which notices of appeal were lodged prior to June 1st, 1904. A further appeal sitting for the county will be held as soon as possible having regard to the claims of other districts.

Scariff (Clare) Drainage.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the necesssity for a drainage scheme for Scariff, county Clare; and whether he will inquire into the matter.

*MR. BRYCE: The Local Drainage Committee have recently applied to the Irish Government for aid to a scheme for improving the Scariff drainage system, and have been informed in reply that it is doubtful whether it will be possible to consider the question of aiding, during the current financial year, any development schemes in addition to those to which assistance has already been promised, but that when any question of taking up new schemes arises, the claims of the Scariff district will receive full consideration.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentlemen be good enough to bear in mind the long-standing necessity for this drainage scheme?

*MR. BRYCE: I will bring the matter to the attention of those who advise me on the subject, and endeavour to have it considered.

Glanquin (Clare) Police Force.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why there is a police force stationed at Glanquin, county Clare, seeing that there is no crime or disorder in that district.

*MR. BRYCE: Glanquin is situated in a remote mountainous district and is six miles distant from the nearest police station. In 1904 it became necessary, owing to the disturbed state of the locality, to establish a police hut at Glanquin. The condition of the district has since improved but, in the Inspector-General's opinion, it is not yet possible to dispense with the police force.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is it for the Inspector-General to decide this case? May I ask whether, in view of the tranquility of the district and the fact that the Judge of Assize congratulated the county on the absence of crime, this police force will be removed irrespective of the opinion of the Inspector-General?

*MR. BRYCE: I could not think of over-ruling the Inspector's opinion. Probably, as the district is not very disturbed, the police may be removed before long.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire into the matter? We have no confidence in the Inspector-General.

*MR. BRYCE replied in the negative.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: On whose authority has the Inspector-General come to his opinion? He does not live in the district.

*MR. BRYCE: No doubt he gets his information from the county and district inspectors.

Clonelly Medical Officer.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why Dr. Dickson, who was a candidate for the position of medical officer for the Clonelly district, part of which is in Fermanagh and part in Donegal, and received a majority of the votes of the combined districts, has not received the appointment; whether he is aware that the actual voting was, in the Fermanagh part, Patton twenty-three, Dickson fourteen, and in the Donegal part, Dickson twenty-two, Patton six, giving Dr. Dickson a majority in the combined districts of seven votes; and if he will inquire as to why the appointment has not been made.

*MR. BRYCE: I am informed that this Question is asked under a misapprehension of the facts. The Clonelly dispensary district is wholly situate in the Irvinestown Union of county Fermanagh; it adjoins the Pettigo dispensary district of the Donegal Union in county Donegal, but the two dispensary Districts are as distinct as any other two dispensary districts in Ireland. The Guardians of Irvinestown Union have appointed Dr. Patton as medical officer of Clonelly dispensary district, and the Guardians of Donegal Union have appointed Dr. Dickson as medical officer of Pettigo dispensary district. Neither Board of Guardians was under an obligation to appoint the medical officer selected by the other, although the two dispensary districts were formerly in charge of one medical officer.

Mrs. Grace Mahon's Roscommon Estate.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the manner in which the Land Act of 1903 is being administered in connection with the estate of Mrs. Grace Mahon, Strokestown, Roscommon; and whether the direct tenants are being led to sign purchase agreements by means of which the subtenants in occupation are deprived of the benefits of reductions in rent given since May 1st, 1905, and grazing lands adjacent to the town are being sold to large graziers instead of being divided amongst the small holders in the district belonging to the class which was supposed to benefit under the Act; and whether the Estates Commissioners will be directed to put the 15th section of the Act into operation.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that 172 agreements for the purchase of holdings on the estate referred to were lodged with them on the 25th instant. The questions of the sub-tenancies and of the lettings to large graziers, will be dealt with by the Commissioners in the ordinary course when the report of the inspection comes before them. The question whether the Commissioners will take action under the 15th section is one for their own determination.

Irish Local Government Auditors—Case of Mr. Drury.

Mr. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why Mr. Drury, an auditor of the Local Government Board, Ireland, who has by length of service attained his maximum rate of salary, namely, £700 a year, has lately been given an addition to his salary of £100 a year on the representation that he is employed in auditing the accounts of county councils, seeing that the only audit for which he is responsible is that of Dublin Corporation accounts, for which he has been responsible for fourteen years without any addition to his salary; and whether, seeing that Mr. Drury also receives a further addition to his salary of £100 a year for controlling the work of his fellow auditors, all of whom have larger experience in conducting audits under the regulations which have been in force since the Local Government Act, 1898, came into operation, and that he is allowed to receive from moneys not provided by Parliament a further salary of £50 a year for work outside his duties as a civil servant, he will explain why he is supplied with the services of a lower division clerk to assist him in earning his emoluments as an auditor.

Mr. BRYCE: Mr. Drury's appointment, duties, salary, emoluments, and staff were fixed in 1904, by the Treasury as the result of a Departmental Inquiry into the audit system in Ireland ordered by their Lordships in 1903. His position is the same as the inspector of audits in England, save that the Local Government Board require him to undertake certain audits in addition to his office work as General Audit Inspector. Mr. Drury has been appointed by the Irish Government to audit the accounts of petty sessions clerks, for which he receives £50 per annum, but the Board do not regard this as outside the duties of a civil servant.

Dublin Corporation and Mr. Drury.

Mr. J. P. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Drury, by whose advice the Local Government Board were guided in the framing of the Accounts Orders that recently gave rise to dissatisfaction, is the officer whose report on the accounts of Dublin Corporation lately appeared; whether he is aware that at a meeting of the corporation, specially convened for the purpose, a Resolution was carried refusing to allow Mr. Drury access to their books; and whether, seeing that this official has been selected to advise the Local Government Board on matters of account and audit generally, and to supervise the work of the other auditors, although he is the only member of the auditorial staff who has not had any experience in auditing accounts which have been completely altered in form and character by the legislation of the past eight years, it is the intention of the Local Government Board to require the corporation to employ this officer, while public bodies of the same standing as the corporation in Great Britain have the right to appoint and remove their auditors and are quite independent of the Local Government Boards of England and Scotland.

Mr. BRYCE: Mr. Drury, together with the other auditors of the Local Government Board, assisted in the preparation of the Public Bodies Order, which is now in force throughout Ireland and working satisfactorily. It is a fact that the corporation passed a resolution refusing Mr. Drury access to their books, owing to his having reported unfavourably on their accounts. It is not a fact that Mr. Drury has had no experience in auditing accounts in recent years. The Local Government Board have the utmost confidence in his ability and integrity, and his experience of the accounts of public bodies is second to none. The fact that a different law exists in England and Scotland does not relieve the Local Government Board in Ireland from the statutory obligation imposed upon them of auditing the accounts of the Dublin Corporation. Nothing but legislation could alter this.

Irish Language in Irish Schools.

Mr. J. P. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the national convention of the United Irish League held in Dublin last December a Resolution was adopted requesting the restoration of the fees for the teaching of Irish as an extra subject in the national schools which were available for the past thirty years, and were only withdrawn during the recent administration of the hon. Member for South Dublin; whether he is aware that similar Resolutions have been adopted by the Irish Hierarchy, by three-fourths of the public boards in Ireland and by numerous branches of the Gaelic League, and other educational bodies; whether the Treasury has yielded to this expression of Irish opinion; and, if so, what is the cause of the delay in cancelling the notice of the Commissioners of National Education withdrawing the fees.

Mr. BRYCE: I have seen the Resolution referred to in the first part of the Question, and am aware that many similar Resolutions have been passed. As to the remainder of the Question, I can only repeat the statement which I made to the hon. Member on the 5th instant,† namely, that the existing system for the teaching of Irish will remain in operation until June 30th next, and that matters have not yet reached a stage at which I can make a definite statement as to what change may then be made. The matter is constantly before me, and as soon as I can make a statement I will do so.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): When may we expect the statement?

Mr. BRYCE: Probably in the next two or three weeks.

Irish Agricultural Inquiry—Mr. Dryden's Interviews.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement made by Mr. John Dryden, formerly Minister of Agriculture for the province of Ontario, Canada, and recently appointed to the Commission to inquire into the agricultural conditions of Ireland, to the effect that Canadian farmers enjoy no advantages over Irish farmers; that the latter are better off by reason of their proximity to the English markets; that if they have fallen behind it is simply due to discouragement; and that, by reason of the Irish Land Act, the Irish farmer is on as good a footing as the Canadian farmer in regard to the procuring and tenure of land; will he state if the Government were aware of Mr. Dryden's views when making the appointment; and whether it is the intention of the Government to continue the appointment in view of the publication of Mr. Dryden's views.

Mr. BRYCE: I have not seen, and am not aware that Mr. Dryden made such statement. He informs me that he has said nothing whatever as to Irish farmers, or their advantages or their discouragement. The Committee was not appointed to inquire into the agricultural conditions of Ireland, but into the working of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. The Government had no knowledge of Mr. Dryden's views when making the appointment. He tells me that he has no preconceived opinions whatever on the matters he is to join in investigating. I believe that Mr. Dryden's knowledge and wide practical experience make him well fitted for the work which he has consented to perform.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: Has the right hon. Gentleman seen the report of the interview given by Mr. Dryden to the *Morning Post* and other English papers, in which he expresses his views in regard to Irish agriculture?

Mr. BRYCE: Mr. Dryden informs me that the reports he has seen are both inaccurate and misleading.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the opinions of this gentleman are said to have been formed after reading a book written by the very man whose conduct he is appointed to inquire into?

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 713.

MR. BRYCE: Mr. Dryden informs me that the opposite is the case. He has formed no opinion, and is waiting to hear the evidence.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Will Mr. Dryden abstain from making speeches and giving interviews to the Press?

MR. BRYCE: He is following a habit common in America, and I am afraid becoming common here, of receiving interviewers to whom he says something which is entirely misreported.

Colonel Malone's Westmeath Estate.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will the Estates Commissioners suspend payment of price and of bonus to Colonel Malone, of Baronstown, Westmeath, pending the distribution of the untenanted land comprised in it among tenants and others in need of land, and the appointment of trustees chosen by the majority of the users for the purpose of controlling the bog; and will they send an inspector with fresh instructions on these points.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that in this case they had already issued instructions to their inspector to report upon the points referred to in the Question. When the inspector's supplementary report has been received the case will come before the Commissioners for consideration and ruling.

Irish Land Annuities.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any special provision is made in the Civil Service Estimates for costs to be incurred in the recovery of annuities from purchasers within the zones under the Land Act of 1903; if so, in what Vote is it included; and is it proposed to pay any of such money to the persons, or to the nominees of the persons, who invented or advised the adoption of the system of purchase without inspection for value.

MR. BRYCE: Provision is made in sub-head F of the Land Commission Vote for the cost of legal proceedings, including proceedings for the collection of land purchase instalments. In the estimates for the current year a sum of £1,600 is provided under that sub-head as compared with £1,800 last year. I do not know to whom it is suggested in the last part of this Question that payments should be made.

Irish Teachers in University Degrees.

MR. LIDDELL (Down, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the intention of the Government to grant a special rate of salary to national school teachers in Ireland who have taken out university degrees, as was recommended by the Commissioners of National Education last year; and how much an increase of £10 per annum to the salaries of all such teachers would cost.

MR. BRYCE: The Answer to the first part of this Question is in the negative. Assuming that one in every dozen teachers qualified for the extra award proposed, it is estimated that the additional cost would amount to £10,000 annually, and it would require to be considered whether this was the best way of expending such a sum.

Irish Local Government Finance.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will grant the Return standing in the name of the hon. Member for Newry.

MR. BRYCE: The information asked for, with the exception of column (5), will be found in the Local Taxation Returns, as also in the Annual Report of the Local Government Board for the year ending March 31st, 1904. In these circumstances it does not appear to be necessary to prepare the Return in its present form, but if the hon. Member should see fit to move for a Return by counties of the fees recovered by the Local Government Board from public bodies for auditing accounts, I will offer no objection.

Appended is the Return referred to.

Mr. Mooney—Public Bodies (Ireland) (Accounts),—Return in respect of the audit of the Accounts, of Public Bodies in Ireland for the financial year ended the 31st day of March, 1904, in the following form:

(I.) County Councils.

Name of County. (1)	Total Expenditure for the year as shown in the Audited Abstracts including Amounts in Col. (3) and Expenditure out of Loans, but excluding moneys transferred to other funds of the same Council. (2)	Total money supplied to Asylum Committee, Boards of Guardians, Rural District Councils, and Committee of Agriculture. (3)	Excess of Amount in Col. (2) over Amount in Col. (3) being net Expenditure (4)	Amount recovered by Treasury from County Council for Auditors' Salaries. (5)	Observations. (6)
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	
Total -					

(II.) County Borough Councils.

Name of County. (1)	Total Expenditure for the year as shown in the Audited Abstracts including Amounts in Col. (3) and Expenditure out of Loans, but excluding moneys transferred to other funds of the same Council. (2)	Total money supplied to Asylum Committee, Board of Guardians, and Technical Instruction Committee. (3)	Excess of Amount in Col. (2) over Amount in Col. (3) being net Expenditure. (4)	Amount recovered by Treasury from County Borough Council for Auditors' Salaries. (5)	Observations. (6)
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	
Total -					

(III.) District Lunatic Asylum Committees.

Name of District Lunatic Asylum. (1)	Names of Counties and County Boroughs comprised in each Asylum District. (2)	Apportioned share for each County and County Borough of Total Expenditure for the year as shown in the Audited Abstracts, including Amounts in Col. (3) and Expenditure out of Loans, but excluding moneys transferred to other funds of the same Councils (3)	Apportioned share for each County of money paid to Boards of Guardians for maintenance of patients under 38 and 39 Vic., cap. 67, sec. 9. (4)	Excess of Amount in Col. (3) over Amount in Col. (4), being net Expenditure. (5)	Apportioned share for each County of the Amount recovered by Treasury from Asylum Committee for Auditors' Salaries, and Total Amount for each Asylum. (6)	Observations. (7)
		£	£	£	£ s. d.	
Total for each Asylum.						
Gross Total -						

(IV.) County Committees of Agriculture and Technical Instruction.

Name of County. (1)	Total Expenditure for the year as shown in the Audited Abstracts including Amounts in Col. (3) and Expenditure out of Loans, but excluding moneys transferred to other funds of the same Council. (2)	Total money supplied to local or Joint Committees. (3)	Excess of Amount in Col. (3) over Amount in Col. (2) being net Expenditure. (4)	Amount recovered by Treasury from Committee for Auditors' Salaries. (5]	Observations. (6)
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	
Total					

(V.) Rural District Councils.

Name of Rural District Council. (1)	Total Expenditure for the year as shown in the Audited Abstracts including Amounts in Col. (3) and Expenditure out of Loans, but excluding moneys transferred to other funds of the same Council. (2)	Total moneys supplied to Joint Burial or other Boards on a Precept or Demand. (3)	Excess of Amount in Col. (2) over Amount in Col. (3) being net Expenditure. (4)	Amount recovered by Treasury from Rural District Council for Auditors' Salaries. (5)	Observations. (6)
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	
Total					

(VI.) Urban District Councils and Town Commissioners.

Name of Urban District Councils and Town Commissioners. (1)	Total Expenditure for the year as shown in the Audited Abstracts including Amounts in Col. (3) and Expenditure out of Loans, but excluding moneys transferred to other funds of the same Council. (2)	Total moneys supplied to County Council and to Joint Burial or other Boards on a Precept or Demand. (3)	Excess of Amount in Col. (2) over Amount in Col. (3) being net Expenditure. (4)	Amount recovered by Treasury from Urban District Council or Town Commissioners for Auditors' Salaries. (5)	Observations. (6)
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	
Total -					

(VII.) Technical Instruction Committees in Urban Districts.

Name of Urban District. (1)	Total Expenditure for the year as shown in the Audited Abstracts including Amounts in Col. (3) and Expenditure out of Loans, but excluding moneys transferred to other funds of the same Committees. (2)	Total moneys (if any) supplied to any other Public Body. (3)	Excess of Amount in Col. (2) over Amount in Col. (3) being net Expenditure. (4)	Amount recovered by Treasury from Committees for Auditors' Salaries. (5)	Observations. (6)
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	
Total -					

(VIII.) Other Public Bodies.

Name of each other Public Body. (1)	Total Expenditure for the year as shown in the Audited Abstracts including Amounts in Col. (3) and Expenditure out of Loans, but excluding moneys transferred to other funds of the same Public Body. (2)	Total moneys (if any) supplied to any other Public Bodies. (3)	Excess of Amount in Col. (2) over Amount in Col. (3) being net Expenditure. (4)	Amount recovered by Treasury from Public Bodies for Auditors' Salaries. (5)	Observations. (6)
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	
Total -					

Ireland's Share of Imperial Taxation.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, having regard to the provisions of the statute, 56 Geo. 3, chapter 98, section 1, he will explain why the Irish Taxation Account is charged with the cost of Imperial services in Ireland; whether the statute permits such discrimination between Irish and other services of any Imperial character whatever; and whether he will consult the law officers of the Crown as to the effect of the statute in this respect, and if it is found that in their opinion, on a case stated, such discrimination is contrary to law, the practice of making such charges will be discontinued.

MR. McKENNA: The section to which the hon. and learned Member refers is the one which combined the Consolidated Funds of Great Britain and Ireland to form the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom and directed that the charges formerly payable out of the separate funds should for the future be paid out of the combined fund. That direction has been and still is carried out in practice. In the annual Financial Relations Returns, for purposes of comparison, the Irish expenditure is shown as a set off against the amount of Revenue estimated to be contributed by Ireland. But this does not mean, as the hon. Member's Question appears to suggest, that the Revenue so contributed is diverted from the Consolidated Fund and applied to meet the Irish expenditure.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question. Will he consult the law officers of the Crown as to whether it is legal to exercise this discrimination?

MR. McKENNA: The Answer is that that discrimination has not been made.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London), who said he regretted the absence of the Prime Minister through illness, asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for a forecast of the business of the week, and particularly as to the Supply to be taken on Thursday.

MR. ASQUITH: We hope to get the Budget resolutions in Committee to-night and to take the Report stage to-morrow. On Wednesday the Plural Voting Bill will be introduced and other Bills proceeded with. The Supply on Thursday will be Irish Supply.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill: Lord Turnour; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Meysey Thompson.

SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee of Selection; that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill: Sir William Evans-Gordon; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Gilbert Parker.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILL.

ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) (No. 2) BILL.

"To grant certificates to persons in charge of Steam Engines, Boilers, and Steam Cranes," presented by Mr. Steadman; supported by Mr. Barnes, Mr. C. Duncan, Mr. James Haslam, and Mr. Joseph Walton; to be read a second time upon Monday, June 18th, and to be printed. [Bill 180.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (WAYS AND MEANS.)

Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings of the Committee of Ways and Means, if under consideration at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 353; Noes, 88. (Division List No. 55.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robertes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Asquith, Rt.Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)

Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'wr'Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire)
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, Sir John T. (Cheshire)
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh,)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert T., Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, W. Bateman (Somers'tN
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Maclean, Donald
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Henry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)

O'Connor, James(Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W.H.M.(Suffolk, Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John(Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley,W. E. B. (Bradford,E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert, H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E.(Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, SirG.Scott(Bradf'd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon

Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas.E.(Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (AshtonunderLyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyluph(Chesh.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J.W.H.(Somerset,E
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips

Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester
Wallace, Robert
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward,W.Dudley(Southampt'n)
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson, A.(Elgin & Nairn)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J.(Huddersf'd)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Ashley, W. W.
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt.Hn.A.J.(CityLond
Beach, Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt.Hon.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane Hon. Thomas, H.A.E
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Lloyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Craig, CaptainJames(Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dixon-Hartland, SirFredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey

Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W.V.(Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'd
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsb'ry)
Hill, Henry Staveley(Staff'sh.)
Hills, J. W.
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hon.Col.W
King, SirHenrySeymour(Hull)
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, ArthurH.(Hants,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long, Col.CharlesW.(Evesham
Lonsdale, John Brownlee

Lowe, Sir Francis William
M'Iver, SirLewis(EdinburghW.
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E.C.
Middlemore, JohnThrogmorton
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Stanley, Hon.Arthur (Ormskrk
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv
Thomson, W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Walrond, Hon. Lionel

Willoughby de Eresby, Lord	Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-	TELLERS FOR THE NOES,—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Lord Balcarres.
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.	Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George	
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm	Younger, George	

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

THE BUDGET STATEMENT.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): It is the custom for every new Chancellor of the Exchequer in turn, when he opens his first Budget speech, to make an appeal for a special measure of the indulgence of this Committee. Never, I am certain, has that claim been put forward with more sincerity, and rarely, I venture to think, with more reason, than it is by me to-day, for in the statement which it is my duty to submit, I shall have to deal with the finances of one year for which I am hardly at all responsible, and with the finances of another year for which, although I have direct responsibility, yet, when I assumed it, I found the field of possible action already to a very large degree limited and circumscribed. One result of these conditions—a very unhappy result—is that I am afraid I shall not be able to compress what I have to say, with due regard to the necessity of adequate explanation, within the limits I am accustomed to observe, and which certainly as a rule the House is entitled to demand. Let me add to that appeal for the consideration of the Committee an expression of the most sincere regret that my predecessor the right hon. Member for East Worcestershire, the only man now left, I think, in this House who has held the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, is disabled by continued ill health from being in his place to-day. We all of us, and not least those who are or have been his political opponents, wish for him complete recovery and a speedy return to the labours of this House.

ESTIMATE FOR THE PAST YEAR AND ITS RESULTS.

My first duty is to pass in review the national accounts for the financial year which expired on March 31st, 1906. According to the balance-sheet presented in the Budget by my predecessor there was for that year an estimated revenue of £142,454,000 and an estimated expenditure of £142,032,000, leaving a margin for contingencies of £422,000. Both sides of the account have falsified the estimate to an unusual, I think to an unprecedented, degree, but happily in each case the error has turned out to be on the right side. The actual revenue has proved to be £143,978,000, an excess over the estimate of £1,524,000. On the other hand, the Exchequer issues for expenditure have only amounted to £140,512,000, a decrease as compared with the estimate of almost exactly the same sum as the excess of revenue—namely, £1,520,000. The margin of revenue over expenditure was thus increased by £3,044,000, which, added to the estimated margin of £422,000, brings out a realised surplus for the last year of £3,466,000.

EXPENDITURE OF 1905–6.

I shall deal in a later part of my statement with the disposition of this welcome and unanticipated addition to my resources; but for the moment it may be interesting to the Committee to learn how it has been brought into existence. Hon. Members will see from the statement supplied to them how the estimated expenditure compares with the actual Exchequer issues. The estimated expenditure of £142,032,000 was increased by supplementary estimates amounting to £172,000, making the anticipated total £142,204,000. But the sum actually issued from the Exchequer was only £140,512,000, or less than the anticipated total by £1,692,000, and less than the Budget estimate by £1,520,000. This diminution has been entirely due to ascertained and estimated savings in the Supply services. The savings are contributed to in a greater or less degree by almost every spending department, and considerably more than half of the whole, or £963,000, is due to the War Office. In order to realise what has been the actual total expenditure met out of revenue, we must add to the items I have mentioned the sum which is intercepted from the Exchequer out of the proceeds of Customs and Inland Revenue and is paid over to the Local Taxation

Account. In 1905–6 the sum so paid over was £9,901,000. Thus, as the Committee will see, the total expenditure of the year provided from revenue was £150,413,000. I lay stress on the words "provided from revenue," because there were in addition issues on capital account amounting to £6,148,000, which I shall deal with when I come to speak of the national indebtedness.

REVENUE OF 1905–6.

Now I turn to the revenue side of the account. I will not use more figures than I can help; for the moment I simply point out that, while there was a diminution anticipated in 1905–6 as compared with the preceding year of £916,000, the actual result was to show an increase over the year before of £608,000, and an excess over the Estimate for 1905–6 of more than £1,500,000. The question arises how it is that the revenue has exceeded my predecessor's calculations by so large an amount.

INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL CONDITIONS IN 1905.

Let me preface a brief analysis of this side of the account by reminding the Committee that the year 1905, as far as the bulk of the industry and commerce of this country was concerned, was a year of slowly but steadily growing prosperity. Our oversea trade reached figures which have never been paralleled. The exports of British and Irish produce, a fallible criterion in itself, but capable of real significance when it is one of the links in a chain of evidence, had a declared value of £330,000,000. If we take, as we are now accustomed to take, the year 1900 as our standard year, the value of the exports of British and Irish produce, estimated at the prices of that year, would work out at £360,000,000, a steady rise in five years of over 23 per cent. Entries and clearances of vessels, and cargoes of foreign trade show a slight increase; and there was a rise in freights estimated at an average of about 10 per cent. The goods receipts of the principal railways grew by 1·32 per cent., and the clearances of London bankers by 17 per cent. The employment of labour, though still below the level of the standard year, 1900, has perceptibly improved. The percentage of unemployment fell from 6·2 in the first quarter to 4·9 in the last quarter. This improvement, moreover, was general throughout almost all the great industries of the country, building and coal-mining being the principal exceptions; and, although there were reductions in these trades, and no actual general rise in the rate of wages, the tendency towards an upward movement became decidedly marked in the second half of the year. So far I have been speaking of the calendar year 1905; but, as the Committee are aware, our accounts include three-fourths of that year and the first quarter of 1906. I am glad to be able to say that all the favourable anticipations have manifested themselves with increasing emphasis in the new year. That I believe to be the main cause of an excess beyond what twelve months ago it would have been natural or legitimate to anticipate.

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE.

Now let the Committee look for a moment at the different items in the accounts. First I turn to Customs and Excise in Table 2; it is the best index of the consuming power of the country. There was an estimated decrease under the head of Customs last year of £1,680,000 and in Excise of £550,000. The actual decrease in Excise has almost exactly tallied with the estimate, there being a trifling gain of £30,000, but in Customs there is a substantial improvement, which brings down the actual decrease to £1,255,000, a difference to the good of £425,000. A principal cause of the decrease, estimated and actual, is of course the reduction of the tea duty from 8d. to 6d. Although as a fact worth noting in passing there has been a substantial increase in the consumption of tea of 10,000,000 lbs., or nearly 4 per cent. over that of 1904–5, the yield of the duty has fallen, and the net loss to the revenue is £1,442,000, the fall having been from £8,272,000 to £6,830,000.

SUGAR.

The main increase in Customs, apart from coal, which shows £180,000, is under the head of sugar, which has exceeded the estimate by £465,000. A considerable decline in the yield of the sugar duty was anticipated in view of the short crop of 1904–5 and a consequent rise in prices; but in the sugar world it is always the unexpected that happens, and the uncertain conditions of the industry from climatic and other causes are unfortunately made still more uncertain by artificial conventions, and, I must add, by organised speculation. The world's production, which in 1904–5 was 9,302,000 tons, rose in 1905–6 to 11,834,000 tons, the speculation to keep up the value broke up in July, and the price of 88 per cent. German beet, which at the end of December, 1904, was 14s. 5d. per cwt., fell at the end of December, 1905, to 8s. 1½d. per cwt. The increase of the crop was beyond all previous records. The result, I am glad to say, has been a steady increase in consumption at home, and the yield of the duty shows an actual increase over 1904–5.

ALCOHOL.

To what then is the absolute want of elasticity in Excise and relative want of elasticity in Customs to be ascribed? The question admits of only one answer, as disconcerting to a Chancellor of the Exchequer as it is welcome, at first sight, at any rate, to social reformers—the steadily diminishing yield of all the duties on alcoholic drinks. If the Committee will keep in mind the total income under this head, £34,500,000, last year, and remember what a large proportion it bears to the whole tax revenue of the country, they will see what a grave matter this is from a revenue point of view. It will be well to review the facts briefly and to show the steadily progressive diminution of the duties under various heads. First I turn to No. 1, and the Committee will note as I go along that the diminution dates from 1899–1900. First, then, wine. The quantity retained for home consumption steadily rose until 1900, when it was 17,150,000 gallons, but since then there has been an almost continuous fall, until last year, 1905–6, the quantity was 11,800,000 gallons. Secondly, I take foreign and colonial spirits, which include, of course, rum and brandy. Here the fall has been from 9,350,000 gallons in 1899–1900 to 6,780,000 gallons in 1905–6. Then home-made spirits, including whisky and gin. Here I find that the quantity of proof gallons retained for consumption in the United Kingdom in 1899–1900 was 38,716,000, and in 1905–6 it was 32,490,000. Finally, if you take beer, the barrels retained for consumption in the United Kingdom in 1899–1900 numbered 36,500,000, and in 1905–6 they were 33,500,000. Meanwhile, of course, the population had grown by somewhere between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000. Now, as I have said, the progressive decline under every head becomes serious when, as I point out, the receipts under all heads show in 1905–6, compared with the previous year, 1904–5, a decrease of no less than £607,000. We are here in face of a change that has affected all strata of society; indeed, the decline in the consumption of wine is more marked than in that of spirits and beer. To what is the change due? Let me say at once I can trace no causal connection between the decreased consumption and the comparatively small increase of taxation proposed in 1900 and continued since. The main reason, I hope and believe, can be found in the growth of temperance principles and the increased power of competing attractions; but I must add for myself that I doubt whether it is safe to base any very wide generalisation as to a lasting change of social habits on the experience of six or seven years, which have been marked by unprecedently large expenditure on a great war, by an enormous increase in the burden of taxation, and by at any rate a very great curtailment of spending power of almost every class of the community. But, for the moment at any rate, no Chancellor of the Exchequer can count any longer upon this as a source of indefinitely expanding revenue. The days in which it used to be said we drank ourselves out of the Alabama claims are days which are over and do not seem likely to return.

DIRECT TAXATION AND POSTAL SERVICES.

I proceed to deal very briefly with the revenue from direct taxation. It is to the yield from this form of taxation that the unexpectedly satisfactory result of the year is in the main to be attributed. The death duties all but reached the estimate of £13,000,000, and show an increase in Exchequer receipts of no less than £627,000 as compared with the previous year. If you add the amount intercepted for the relief of local taxation you will find that the total result produced by this tax in the course of the twelve months was no less than £17,336,000. Stamps, which are in some respects a very good criterion of the volume of trade, have shown considerable elasticity, the estimate of £8,000,000 having been exceeded by £180,000. This is largely due to the increased volume of business on the London Stock Exchange. Income tax maintained its productiveness, the Exchequer receipts were £31,350,000, showing a slight increase over those of the preceding year. The produce of each penny in the pound of this tax has slightly exceeded any figure hitherto recorded. Lastly comes the Post Office and Telegraph Services, the largest contributors to our gains, yielding between them an excess of nearly £500,000 over the last Budget estimate and of more than £1,000,000 over the receipts of the previous year. This is a still more satisfactory indication of the general progress of business in the country, though to some extent it must be put down to exceptional causes, such, for instance, as the general election, which led to a large growth in the volume of postal and telegraph business, and there has been an extraordinary popularity in a new fashion of correspondence with which some of us are painfully familiar—the picture post-card. But, apart from these, there is indication of steady growth of receipts over issues in Post Office services in the last ten years. The average annual surplus for the five years 1897–1902 was £3,728,800, and for the five years 1902–7 (including the estimate for 1906–7) it works out at £4,473,400. It is right to add that the expenditure out of Post Office votes ten years ago was only 73 per cent. of the revenue, but it has now risen to 76 per cent.

LOCAL TAXATION ACCOUNTS.

I must not conclude my survey without again reminding the Committee that the total paid into the Exchequer, that is to say, £143,978,000, does not represent the whole income collected by the State in 1905–6. You must add the sums intercepted from Customs, Excise, and estate duties and handed over to local taxation accounts, amounting to £9,901,000, which brings the total revenue of the year up to £153,878,000. Before I part from this subject I must for myself say emphatically that I regard this procedure of the interception and earmarking of particular Imperial taxes for local purposes as in its nature fallacious and misleading. It complicates and confuses the national accounts, and urgently calls, as do all the relations between Imperial and local taxation, for prompt and thorough review.

EXCHEQUER BALANCES.

In accordance with the intention of my predecessor, which seemed to me thoroughly sound, I have devoted the surplus revenue, the old Sinking Fund of 1904–5, to strengthening the Exchequer balance by repayment of deficiency advances. Thus, the Committee will see that £1,414,000 of these advances were paid off. We started the financial year with a balance of £7,430,000. We close the year with a balance of £10,451,000. The increase is mainly due to the realised surplus of the year which has now become the old Sinking Fund of 1905–6—namely, £3,466,000. To this has to be added the balance of the bullion account—£285,000; while we have to deduct £584,000, the excess of issues on capital account over borrowings during 1905–6, and the loss on Exchequer bonds created under the Finance Act of 1905, and issued at a discount—namely, £146,000. The net growth in the balance for the year is thus £3,021,000.

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE OF 1906–7.

I pass to forecast the prospects of the new financial year, and here I will deal with expenditure first. The anticipated expenditure on Imperial account for the year 1906–7 is £141,786,000—that is a diminution of £246,000 on the Budget provision for the preceding year. Then we have to add £9,835,000, the anticipated contribution to local taxation. The two together make a total of £151,621,000 for the year 1906–7, against a Budget provision of £151,788,000 for 1905–6. A further estimated expenditure of £6,500,000, chargeable against capital, I will reserve for later treatment. I have very little to say about this estimated expenditure. The estimates are not in any way the work of the present Government. Coming into office, as we did, in the month of December, and much occupied during January with the general election, my colleagues presiding over the spending departments could not, with the best will in the world, do much to recast the expenditure of the country. The total diminution in the Supply services is £311,000. The Supply services were estimated, in round figures, to cost for this year £111,000,000—a gigantic and, in my opinion, an excessive sum. I hope and believe, from what I know of the intentions and the zeal of my colleagues, that, if it is my fortune twelve months hence to submit the national accounts again, I shall be able to announce, without any weakening in the national services, a substantial saving under these heads.

FORECAST OF REVENUE ON BASIS OF EXISTING TAXATION.

I pass now to the estimated revenue of 1906–7. The expenditure on Imperial account to be provided for out of the Budget being £141,786,000, I have to inquire upon what revenue I can reasonably count on the supposition that taxation remains unchanged. First of all, I should mention that the present financial year is, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's point of view, a tiresome freak of the calendar. April 1st last was a Sunday, and March 31st, 1907, will be a Sunday; and thus the year will contain fifty-three Sundays instead of the normal allowance of fifty-two. And, Sir, there is still worse to come —from a fiscal point of view. Owing to the vagaries of the moon, Easter, which came in April this year, will next year fall in March, and there will consequently be included in the financial twelve months two Good Fridays. I am thus compelled to make a more sober estimate than I should otherwise do of certain important sources of revenue; though against this influence is to be reckoned the growth of population, and, I hope, an increased spending power of the people. I estimate the decrease of customs at £245,000. This allows for a further fall in the receipts from foreign spirits and a reduction in the yield of tea, on the assumption that the duty will be at 6d. for all the four quarters of the year, instead of, as last year, at 8d. for the first quarter and at 6d. for the other quarters. On the other hand, I estimate a slight increase in sugar and tobacco. Excise remains practically the same with a diminution of £30,000. I should, anticipating a diminished consumption of alcohol, put it lower still; but in the March quarter the beer duty has shown some signs of recovery. I allow for a slight decrease in stamps and a slight increase in the estate duty and a considerable increase in Post Office and telegraph service, £840,000. Therefore, the estimated revenue for 1906-7 on the basis of existing taxation is as follows:—Customs, £34,230,000; Excise, £30,200,000; estate duties, £13,200,000; stamps, £8,150,000; land tax, £700,000; house duty, £1,950,000; property and income-tax, £31,500,000—total Exchequer receipts from taxation, £119,930,000—an increase of £55,000. To this must be added:—Post Office, £17,500,000; telegraphs, £4,350,000; Crown lands, £480,000; Suez Canal and sundry loans, £1,100,000; miscellaneous, £1,500,000—total Exchequer receipts from non-tax revenue, £24,930,000. That brings the total Exchequer revenue for the year to £144,860,000, or an increase of £882,000 over the Exchequer receipts of 1905–06. I am now in a position to submit to the Committee the balance-sheet—not the final one—but the balance-sheet on the basis of existing taxation. Estimated revenue, £144,860,000; estimated expenditure, £141,786,000; estimated surplus for the year, £3,074,000. If I deduct from this, as I must for safety, at least £400,000 as a margin for contingencies, I am left with a disposable balance of very nearly £2,700,000. What shall I do with it?

SURVEY OF FINANCIAL SITUATION DURING PAST TEN YEARS.

Before I answer that question, I will ask the Committee to take a rather larger survey than is usual on these occasions of our financial situation. We are in the first session of a new Parliament, and in the first year of office of a new Government. Let us, before we take any step of our own upon the road, realise clearly whence we have travelled, where we stand, and whither, if we pursue the same path, we are going. Our expenditure, our indebtedness, our taxation, how does each compare with what it was and what it ought to be? I make no apology for the retrospect upon which I am about to enter, and it will not be conceived in any polemical spirit. It may take some little time, but I am not without hope that it may impress upon the House, as it has impressed on me, a much needed lesson.

I go back ten years for my starting point. The population of the United Kingdom, which in the middle of 1896 was 39,600,000, had risen in the middle of 1906 to 43,600,000—an increase of 10 per cent.

EXPENDITURE.

The national expediture on Imperial account—I exclude from both sides the intercepted sums for local taxation—was in 1896–7 £101,477,000. For the present financial year it is £141,786,000—an increase of 39 per cent. Of this increase of £40,300,000 as much as £21,000,000 is to be put down to the Army and the Navy. In 1896–7 the numbers voted for the Army were 156,000, and the cost was £18,270,000. In 1906–7 the numbers voted are 204,000 and the cost is £29,796,000—an increase in numbers of over 30 per cent. and in cost of over 63 per cent. For the Navy, the numbers borne in 1896–7 were 91,500, and the cost was £22,170,000. In 1906–7 the numbers are 129,000, and the cost is £31,869,000—an increase in numbers of 41 per cent., and in cost of 43 per cent. The Civil Service total cost had increased during the same period by over £9,000,000, of which more than two-thirds must be attributed to education. The aggregate expenditure on Class 4 (educational services) was in 1896–7 a little over £10,500,000. In 1906–7 it is estimated at nearly £17,000,000 — an increase of no less than 60 per cent. By far the largest part of the increased expenditure must be put down to the additional provision for elementary education in England and Wales, an amount which grows automatically, but by leaps and bounds, with the growth of the school population, but is constantly being added to by aid grants and other forms of subsidy, and, as the Committee well knows, is likely before long to receive another enormous contribution from the resources of the State. Due allowance is to be made, and ought always to be made, for the growth not only of population, but of the national demand for education during the same period. These figures appear to me to call for no comment. They speak with an eloquence which needs no rhetorical embroidery. In my opinion they make a return to more thrifty and economical administration the first and paramount duty of the Government.

Mr. Asquith.

DEBT.

I pass now to a comparison equally significant and full of warning between the indebtedness of the State as it stood ten years ago and as it stands to-day. This is a rather long and complicated chapter, and I must tax the patience of the Committee in dealing with it. The aggregate gross liabilities of the nation—I will explain shortly what that phrase means—on March 31st, 1896, were £652,287,000. On March 31st, 1906, they had grown to £788,990,000, an increase of £136,000,000, or 21 per cent. It will be well to keep those percentage increases in mind—population 10 per cent.; expenditure 39 per cent; indebtedness 21 per cent. The liabilities of the nation reached their lowest figure—£635,400,000 it was—in 1899 on the eve of the war, and their highest for the last thirty-five years, £798,400,000, in 1903. There has thus been a net reduction in the last three years since 1903 of about £9,500,000, of which no less than £7,750,000 must be set down to the credit of the last financial year, 1905–6. Here is a fact which I think we ought all to bear in mind. In the thirty years between 1870 and 1899 the gross national liabilities had been reduced by nearly £150,000,000. The benefit of the whole of that reduction, which occupied the best part of the lifetime of a generation, has been completely wiped out in the last seven years and our total capital indebtedness stands today practically at the same figure as in 1871. These are facts which speak for themselves. Second, and second only, to the duty of reducing expenditure, is that of making a more adequate provision for the reduction of debt. In order to obtain the fulfilment of the one we are, as I explained, able to do little during the present financial year; but towards the fulfilment of the other, I am able and I intend to ask the Committee to make a substantial contribution. I ask the special indulgence of the Committee while I endeavour to track my way through a jungle of technicalities and a forest of figures. Our gross National Debt falls, as the Committee is aware, into two different categories—first, the dead-weight debt, consisting of Consols, terminable annuities, and unfunded or floating debt, and, secondly, other capital liabilities created of late years by various Acts of Parliament and incurred for the most part in respect of naval and military works. A comparison between 1896 and 1906 brings us to the following result. The dead-weight debt has risen in ten years from £648,000,000 to £743,000,000, an increase of £95,000,000, of which no less than £55,750,000 is due to the growth of the unfunded or floating debt. The whole increase in the dead-weight debt was caused by the war. The "other capital liabilities" have risen in ten years from £4,000,000 to £45,770,000—that is to say, they have been multiplied by something like eleven times. By far the greater part of this increase has taken place in the last five years.

DEAD-WEIGHT DEBT.

I should like to make clear a distinction between the two classes of debt, not always apprehended outside the House, and sometimes not even inside. The increase in the dead-weight debt—by far the most serious increase—has gone for the most part, as is often said, in powder and shot; and apart from the Suez Canal shares and balances at the Bank there are no countervailing assets, with the exception of course—not an altogether negligible exception—of the British Empire which, as we realise on Budget nights, has been to a large degree built up, defended, and developed on borrowed money. Further, the provision which Parliament has made for the reduction of the principal of the dead-weight debt consists since the Act of 1875 of two sinking funds—the old sinking fund or the realised surplus of the past year, a mere windfall and creature of accident, and the new sinking fund which represents the balance which remains of the fixed charge for the debt after you have paid interest and the cost of management for the year, including principal and interest of the terminable annuities. That is a fairly accurate description of the dead-weight debt.

OTHER CAPITAL LIABILITIES.

The "other capital liabilities," though small in amount—£45,000,000, compared with the £743,000,000—have been increasing much more rapidly. They stand on quite a different footing. With the exception of a small outstanding sum for the Russian Dutch loan, they have all been created in the last fifteen years by Acts of Parliament for special purposes. Unlike the dead-weight debt, they are, or ought to be, represented by specific and tangible assets, telegraphs, railways, cables, public buildings, and military and naval structures of various kinds and of very varying value which are scattered over the Empire from Wei-hai-wei to Salisbury Plain. Further, Sir, and this is an even more important distinction—every one of these loans has a separate sinking fund of its own, and a charge not merely for interest but for the redemption of principal appears every year on the votes of the accounting department or, in the case of the Russian Dutch loan and the Cunard agreement, on the Consolidated Fund. In the current financial year we shall vote in the Estimates a sum of nearly £2,000,000—£1,900,000—towards the repayment of capital under these various loans, of which about £1,250,000 are charged to the Army and Navy Votes. These are distinctions sometimes obscured which ought in fairness to be borne in mind. There must undoubtedly arise from time to time cases of charges which properly fall under the head of capital expenditure for which temporary borrowing is legitimate; but in the main I regard this as a most unhappy chapter in the history of our national finance; and so far as the Army and Navy are concerned my intention is at the earliest possible moment to bring it to a close. The system, as it has been developed of recent years, has, in my opinion, three fundamental vices. In the first place it tends to confuse the distinction between capital and revenue charges. In the next place it inevitably encourages in the spending departments crude, precipitate, and wasteful experiments. And in the third place (and this is not the least important consideration) it draws large items of annual expenditure from any effective Parliamentary supervision. I will not trouble the Committee with any unnecessary detail, but the present position as regards this class of debt on March 31st, 1906, was this: The amount of capital liabilities under various Acts was £51,750,000. The amount paid off from first to last was £6,027,000, and the amount of capital liability outstanding, including the Russian Dutch loan, was £45,770,000, a net increase during the year of £4,106,000. The amounts issued during the year under this head were, as I have already stated,

£6,148,000, which sum was made up of £5,564,000 new borrowings and £584,000 paid out of balances. On the other hand, £1,458,000 was repaid by terminable annuities provided on Votes, and in addition a sum of £226,630 provided on Army and Navy Votes for the redemption of Exchequer bonds, now in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners, will in due time be applied to that purpose.

LOANS FOR NEW WORKS.

As regards the future, the principle has been laid down that new naval and military works are not to be commenced with borrowed money. Future borrowings under the still unexhausted powers of the existing Acts are, as a rule, to be confined to the continuation and completion of works already in hand. The proposals both of the Army and the Navy for the year have been carefully scrutinised from this point of view. In the case of the Army, which still has a balance of borrowing power of nearly £6,000,000 the loans for the year will be limited to £1,500,000, which will be applied to continuation works, with the possible exception of works of an urgent and unforeseen character, the necessity for which may become apparent in the course of the year. That £1,500,000, once borrowed, will, so far as this service is concerned, close the book. The naval works in actual progress are on so large a scale that their estimated requirements for 1906–7 are about £3,200,000. This will bring the Navy within £1,000,000 of its unexhausted funds. There are a number of similar sums which fall to be borrowed under other Acts, the most important of which are telegraphs and the Cunard Agreement. I cannot at this moment give the precise figures, but the total for all purposes may be taken as £6,500,000. I deduct from that the sum of £1,900,000, the amount charged in the Votes for this year for the repayment of principal, and there will be, therefore, a net addition for the year under this head of capital liabilities of £4,600,000.

REDUCTION OF DEBT IN 1905–6.

Now, Sir, I pass to the dead-weight debt, and here again the matter is of some complexity, and it is necessary that it should as far as possible be made clear. It stood on April 1st, 1905, the beginning of the financial year, at £755,072,000. Of this £683,439,000 is funded debt and capital value of terminable annuities, and £71,633,000 is unfunded or floating debt. The first item has been reduced during the twelve months, mainly by the automatic operation of the annuities, by £5,932,000, and the unfunded debt during the same period by an almost exactly similar sum, namely, £5,920,000. Thus in the year—and this is not unsatisfactory—the total amount of dead-weight debt was lowered by £11,852,000, and it now stands as I have stated at £743,220,000; but the contemporaneous increase which I have already mentioned in our other capital liabilities of £4,106,000 reduces the total diminution of the gross indebtedness of the State for the year to £7,746,000. That is the net amount of debt paid off last year.

THE UNFUNDED DEBT.

I must describe with more particularity the proceedings in the year to contract the unwieldy and dangerous bulk of the unfunded or floating debt, which is far and away the most serious factor in our financial situation at this moment. This debt consisted on April 1st, 1905, of three items; the War Loan at 2¾ per cent. interest, repayable in 1910, £30,000,000; Exchequer bonds at 3 per cent., maturing as to £14,000,000 in 1905 and as to £6,500,000 in 1907; and, thirdly, Treasury bills at short dates and bearing varying rates of interest, £21,133,000, bringing out the total of the floating debt at £71,633,000. I ought to say for the sake of clearness we do not include in this enumeration the Exchequer bonds for £6,000,000 created under the Capital Expenditure Act of 1904. They have a Sinking Fund of their own.

What was done in the year 1905–6 to reduce the bulk of floating debt? The item my predecessor selected for immediate attack was that of Exchequer bonds, of which £14,000,000 were due to mature in December last. His plan was to pay off £4,000,000 of these bonds and to issue in place of the remainder a new series of £10,000,000 at 2¾ per cent. instead of 3 per cent., which were to have a currency of ten years, but to be redeemable by annual drawings of £1,000,000. The drawings were provided for by raising for the time the annual fixed charge for the Debt from £27,000,000 to £28,000,000, and in this way what may be described as a new Sinking Fund was brought into existence, specially earmarked for the gradual redemption and extinction at the end of ten years of the £10,000,000. The immediate reduction effected by this operation in the unfunded debt was the paying off of £4,000,000 out of the £14,000,000 of the then current Exchequer bonds. How did my predecessor acquire the funds for that purpose? First and foremost, he took advantage, quite rightly, of a windfall from South Africa—whence windfalls do not, as a rule, blow in the direction of the Exchequer—to the extent of £1,213,000. He then added to that the still unemployed new Sinking Fund of 1904 amounting to £2,219,000, and for the balance of £568,000 to make up the £4,000,000 he drew on the new Sinking Fund for the current year. These £10,000,000 of new bonds were issued in April, 1905, the instalments being spread over six months; and, notwithstanding that they bear interest at 2¾ per cent. and every holder must be repaid at par at the outside within ten years, the average price obtained did not exceed £98 13s. 10d. The Committee will see that, on the whole, it was a disappointing operation. The first £1,000,000 of the bonds was drawn in February, but not acually paid off till April 18th, and, therefore, that amount taken from the new Sinking Fund in 1905–6 cannot be credited to the discharge of the unfunded debt in that year. The Committee will observe that when I came into office last December the new Sinking Fund for 1905–6 was already hypothecated in respect of the payment of the old and the drawing of the new Exchequer bonds to the extent of £1,568,000. The total amount of the new Sinking Fund was £3,449,000. After much consideration, I directed that the balance, amounting with sundry accretions to £1,920,000, should be applied to paying off Treasury Bills as they fell due during the March quarter. The result is that the outstanding Treasury Bills, which were at the commencement of the financial year £21,133,000, have been reduced at its close to £19,213,000. The two operations together reduced the unfunded debt by £5,920,000, without taking into account the £1,000,000 of new Exchequer bonds paid off during the present month. That means a net reduction in the capital indebtedness of the State for the year of £7,750,000, not altogether an unsatisfactory result. We have got to go back for nearly ten years to find anything like a corresponding reduction. But I must add that if there is any meaning or force in the considerations which I have been urging, this is not the moment to slacken our efforts.

THE FUTURE OF THE DEBT.

The unfunded debt, if we no longer include, as I think we ought not, the £10,000,000 of Exchequer bonds, still amounts to £55,750,000, and this is to me a source of the greatest disquietude from two points of view. In the first place, it must be obvious to everybody that it would seriously hamper our borrowing powers if a sudden emergency arose for which temporary provision had to be made by way of loan. And, secondly—and this is a consideration which, I think, is not sufficiently borne in mind by the public at large—it means that the Government is competing for and locking up funds that might otherwise be available for commercial and industrial purposes. The speedy contraction in this floating debt is, in my opinion, a matter of urgent necessity, even if it calls for some self-denial on the part of the taxpayer. Let me see in what resources I can count for the repayment of Debt in 1906–7? Here, again, I have to explain a very technical matter.

EXPIRY OF TERMINABLE ANNUITIES.

The year 1906 sees the close of two sets of terminable annuities set up by the National Debt Act, 1883. First there are the converted annuities, the annual charge for which is £684,000, which came to an end in February last; and, secondly, there are the Chancery funds annuities, the annual charge for which is £2,324,516, in respect of which the final payment will be made next July. The two together amount to a little over £3,000,000; but, as there are still two quarters, April and July, to be paid on account of the Chancery funds annuities, the sum of which the State will be relieved in the present financial year will be only £1,846,280. I have had to consider whether, in substitution for these expiring annuities, I should set up fresh annuities, and I have come to the conclusion not to do so. Terminable annuities are in many ways a convenient and useful instrument of Debt reduction. They wrap up and disguise the process of repayment, and they are supposed—though recent experience has shown that that is not always the case—to be safe from temporary suspension or reduction at the hands of a hardly-pressed Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is a mistake to suppose that the expiry of these annuities adds anything to the provision for repayment of Debt. As long as the fixed charge is not encroached on or enlarged, it makes no real difference if the balance, after paying interest and cost of management, is applied to the reduction of Debt, whether it passes through the devious channel of terminable annuities or whether it goes straight and direct into the new Sinking Fund. In determining which method you ought to adopt, you must determine what part of the capital you are most anxious to attack; and, in view of all the circumstances, for reasons which I prefer not to elaborate now, I shall leave this annual sum, which has been hitherto tied up in annuities, in a more liquid form and free to discharge any kind of debt to which it can be legally devoted. The result of the non-renewal of the annuities is neither to increase nor to reduce the total applicable to redemption, but simply to give greater latitude in its application.

DEBT FIGURES FOR 1906–7.

I come now, Sir, to the Debt figures for 1906–7—the fixed annual charge for Debt. I estimate that, after interest and management have been paid, there will be a balance on the fixed charge amounting to £9,000,000 available for the reduction of the capital of debt. Of this, £3,650,000 will represent the capital included in the instalments payable on the remaining terminable annuities; £1,000,000, in accordance with the arrangement last year, will go to the drawing and cancellation of Exchequer bonds, and the balance of £4,350,000 will go to the new Sinking Fund. But this happily does not exhaust the matter. I explained at the beginning that the realised surplus of last year, amounting to £3,466,000, which constitutes the old Sinking Fund of 1905–6, must by law be devoted to the repayment of Debt. Therefore, in round figures, the total provision for 1906–7 is £12,500,000. But I cannot leave out of sight the fact that you have to borrow for the present year for capital liabilities a sum estimated at £6,500,000, against which has been set off the provision made in the Votes for the repayment of similar liabilities of £1,900,000, and you are still left with an increase of Debt under this head of £4,600,000. In my opinion, if we are to do our duty in the matter, we must not be content with this.

PROPOSAL—ADDITION TO SINKING FUND.

We must make a substantial addition to the provision for debt redemption; and for this purpose I propose first to draw on my own surplus, the estimated surplus of 1906–7, to the extent of £500,000, and to take another £500,000—which will bring the additional contribution for the year towards the redemption of the Debt up to £1,000,000—from a different source. What is that source? By the protocol of September 7th, 1901, China agreed to pay to the aggrieved Powers, of whom we were one, an indemnity of 450,000,000 Haikwan taels, by annual payments, with interest at 4 per cent., for thirty-nine years from 1902. The British share of this was 50,620,545 taels, or £7,593,081, being 11¼ per cent of the total. Of this, £1,500,000 goes in settlement of private and railway claims, and the free balance due to the British Government, payable in annual instalments, may be put approximately at £6,000,000. There is a balance now at the bank, which has never yet reached the Exchequer, on this account of £359,000; and with the further instalments to come in we may reckon on a total of £500,000 from this source for 1906–7. Having regard to the origin of this indemnity and to its history, I see no purpose to which this and the succeeding instalments can be better put than the repayment of Debt. The result will be that the total provision made during the year for the reduction of the dead-weight debt will be about £13,500,000, and that the reduction in the gross capital liabilities of the State ought to amount for the year to nearly £9,000,000, a large, but, in the circumstances, by no means an excessive sum. I must add that the modest demand I have made on the surplus must have been considerably greater but for the largely fortuitous and wholly unforeseen dimensions of the old Sinking Fund of 1905–6.

DISPOSAL OF REMAINDER OF THE SURPLUS.

Now, Sir, I approach the more agreeable, as I am sure it will be the more interesting, part of my task. But before I deal with taxation, there are two other encroachments upon the disposal of the surplus which I feel myself obliged to provide. Out of all my colleagues who sit on this bench, if I were asked which were the sturdiest and most valiant beggars, I should without any hesitation divide the prize between two of them—the President of the Board of Education and the Postmaster-General. There is, however, a point of distinction between them. The Postmaster-General, as I have already acknowledged, is a revenue-providing instrument. He brings grist to the mill. But the President of the Board of Education—though there is much about him and his office which appeals to our higher nature—does nothing, or less than nothing, to grease the financial wheels, unless, indeed, you can call the dust of controversy a lubricant. I will deal first with his demands.

NECESSITOUS SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

He wants in addition to the colossal sum which already appears on his Estimates a further contribution from the Exchequer to meet the special exigencies of certain necessitous school districts, of which East and West Ham are the type—districts where you have side by side an exceptionally poor population and an exceptionally high school rate. The problem is not a new one. For some time it has taxed the Education Office and knocked at the doors of the Treasury. I cannot either deny the urgency or resist the justice of the demand; and I propose to devote—I will not say to its solution, but, at any rate, to its appeasement—the sum of £135,000 out of the surplus. It is clearly to be understood that this is a temporary grant for the existing year.

POSTAL REFORMS.

The case of the Postmaster-General is different. He wishes me to sacrifice some of the revenue which I should otherwise obtain from him for effecting improvements in the service, and giving increased facilities to the public. Among the many large and beneficent schemes on which his affections are set, he agrees to be content in the present year with two or three, which I must briefly enumerate and describe. The first is the revision of the upper scale of the parcel post, which I can best explain by an illustration. A 4lb. parcel will continue to be carried as at present for 6d., a 5lb. parcel for 6d. instead of 7d., a 7lb. parcel for 7d. instead of 9d., and parcels from 7lb. to 11lb. at a rate of 1d. per lb. It is believed that this reduction will be especially beneficial to agriculturists, and particularly to those who carry on their industry on a small scale, and who in consequence of it will be able to send consignments of fowls, butter, eggs, vegetables, and other produce by post at a much easier rate. Secondly, we give enlarged postal and telegraphic facilities to rural districts, securing that each place in the United Kingdom shall have save in very exceptional cases at least three deliveries a week, and, in case of a guarantee being required, where postal telegraph or telephone facilities are given, the Postmaster-General shall in ordinary conditions take two-thirds of the risk. Thirdly, we give a reduction of commission on postal orders for small amounts. The present scale presses very heavily on the comparatively poor. The commission on postal orders of 2s. and 2s. 6d. will be reduced from 1d. to ½d., and on orders of 11s. to 15s. inclusive from 1½d. to 1d. At the same time, the commission on foreign and colonial money orders for sums not exceeding £1 will be reduced from 4d. to 3d. There will finally be an enlargement of the definition of documents transmissible by post at ½d., so as to give benefit to purely formal communications. This will stop a good deal of friction between the Post Office and the trading community. Assuming that the changes in the parcel post and postal order rates come into force on July 1st and those in the halfpenny post on October 1st, there will be in the current financial year an estimated loss of revenue of £105,000.

RELIEF OF TAXATION.

I have now got rid of £740,000, and I am left, after allowing a margin, with a little less than £2,000,000, which can be properly applied towards the relief of taxation. Now I think that it will be generally agreed that the most urgent case either for reduction or repeal is to be found amongst those taxes which were increased in amount or for the first time imposed during the period of the war. I will revert for a moment to my comparison between 1896 and 1906. I find that additional taxation has in the interval been imposed to the annual amount of about £23,000,000. The income-tax has been raised from 8d. to 1s., the beer and spirits duties have been raised respectively by 1s. a barrel and 6d. a gallon, tea from 4d. to 6d. per lb., unmanufactured tobacco from 2s. 8d. to 3s. as regards the raw leaf, and to 3s. 3d. as regards strips, while new duties which were not in existence before the war have been imposed on exported coal at 1s. a ton and on imported sugar at 4s. 2d. a cwt. These appear to have claims to the first consideration. But it is obvious that with the funds at my disposal they cannot all receive immediate or equal relief, and I am therefore driven to the difficult and invidious task of selection. Let me pass them in review.

THE INCOME-TAX.

In regard to the income-tax, I do not hesitate to associate myself with the declarations of more than one of my predecessors that an income-tax of a uniform rate of 1s. in the pound at a time of peace is impossible to justify. It is a burden on the trade of the country which in the long run affects not only profits but wages. It presses with excessive and peculiar severity on that large class of the community with incomes of from £700 to £2,000 a year, who pay in addition their full share of the taxation on articles of consumption; and from the point of view of the nation it is open to the same objection as the continuance at an abnormal figure of the floating debt, namely, that it tends to destroy, or at any rate to contract, a most readily available reserve on which the State can draw in a sudden and unforeseen emergency. But that reduction of the income-tax by a penny means in these days a sacrifice of £2,600,000, which is more than this year I can afford. Although I am not able to give any immediate relief to the income-tax payer I propose to take a step which will at any rate clear the ground for future operations. There are two familiar and, in point of justice and economic principle, valid objections to the incidence of the tax. They are, as every one knows, first, that above the limits of exemption and abatement it is levied at a uniform rate; and, secondly, that no distinction is made between precarious and permanent incomes. It appears to me that the time has come for a searching and authoritative inquiry, and at the earliest possible moment I shall ask the House to appoint as strong a Select Committee as we can get together to undertake the task. The reference to the Committee will be simply to inquire into the practicability of graduation and differentiation. It is well known, however, that many experts in these matters have grave doubts as to whether it is possible to reconcile graduation with our practice of collecting the tax at its source, and as to whether the additional yield of a graduated tax would be sufficient in amount to compensate for the worry, cost, and irritation which it might involve. On the other hand, there is the experience of foreign countries and of our self-governing Colonies, who have made experiments in that direction and apparently are contented with them. I express no opinion of my own as to the probable results of an inquiry. I am satisfied it ought to be held, and held without delay.

TAXES ON ALCOHOL.

All the other taxes which I have enumerated are taxes on commodities. With the extra duty on beer and spirits proposed in 1900, and since annually renewed, I do not propose to interfere. In my opinion, as I have already said, it has not been an operative cause of the diminution of consumption; if it were, I do not feel sure that I should be called upon to remove it. The anomalous and unsatisfactory condition of the licensing duties, of course, does not escape my attention; but I must postpone dealing with that until the House has before it the licensing legislation which the Government proposes to introduce and the general relations between local and Imperial taxes come up for review. In the meantime, I may mention that I propose to reintroduce the legislation which was attempted, but not carried through, last year to facilitate the use of alcohol for industrial purposes and to bring the growing industry of the manufacture of what are called "basis wines," which are manufactured in the United Kingdom and come more or less into competition with duty-paid foreign wines, under Excise supervision and control.

THE TOBACCO DUTY.

A Chancellor of the Exchequer who touches the tobacco duty is apt to find, as many of my predecessors have found, that he has put his hand into a wasps' nest. But there is one change under this head which, in view of what took place in the last Parliament and of our subsequent experience, I feel bound to propose without delay. I almost tremble to utter, and hon. Members who were present in the last House of Commons will, I am sure, tremble to hear, the two words "leaf" and "strips." Hours and days, and even weeks, of embittered controversy are associated in our memory with these simple monosyllables. It will be in the recollection of all who sat in the House in 1904 that my predecessor for the first time differentiated between leaf and strip tobacco, and proposed an extra duty of 3d. per lb. on strips. The ground alleged for the alteration was that stripping was a process of manufacture, and to admit raw leaf and strips at the same rate of duty was in effect to discourage stripping at home and encourage it abroad. It was further contended that as leaf carries more moisture and sand than strips, there was more smokable tobacco in a pound of strips than in a pound of leaf, and therefore it ought to pay a higher duty. A fierce controversy ensued, in which my hon. friend who sits near me, the Secretary of the Treasury, and my hon. and learned friend the Solicitor-General, took an extremely belligerent part, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was only able to carry through his scheme by consenting to a rebate of half. the duty, 1½d. out of 3d., on all strips then in bond. The effective duty has ever since been at that rate, 1½d., as the quantity of strips in bond was over 140,000,000 lbs. weight—rather more than two years consumption. I am satisfied that little or no revenue will ever be derived from the 3d. duty. The curious result, which was predicted by both the hon. Gentlemen, has been that in two years the stock of leaf in bond has considerably more than doubled, and that of strips has diminished by half. A differential duty is in my opinion wholly unjustified, being at the same time prejudicial to the trade and unfruitful to the revenue. I propose to reduce the duty on strips from 3s. 3d. to 3s. 0½d. which will leave a difference of a halfpenny between strips and leaf. Leaf will have that advantage, and considering the relatively short supply, and that that supply cannot be materially increased for the purpose of consumption for the best part of two years, the existing holders of leaf ought to have no difficulty in disposing of their stocks. The reduction of the duty on strips will entail a reduction in the scale of drawbacks. I propose that the new scale of duties shall come into force at once, and the new drawbacks three weeks hence, May 21st. I do not anticipate in view of the prospect in any event of a considerable addition to the consumption of tobacco, that this change will involve any appreciable loss of revenue.

"PERMANENT" TAXES.

The duty on sugar and that on exported coal were imposed in 1901. Although they were no doubt suggested by the exigencies of the war, they were not put forward by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer as mere temporary expedients. On the contrary, he intended, as he said, by means of them to widen the basis of taxation, and they were to be regarded as taxes of a permanent character. I confess I have always looked upon both of them as singularly unsuited to that purpose. Sugar, which had been admitted free of tax for nearly thirty years, may fairly be ranked among the necessaries of life, and it is, further, raw material for more than one important industry. Again, an export duty like that upon coal is unique in our fiscal system, and it handicaps the British producer in those foreign markets where he is exposed to the keenest competition. Nor can we forget in this connexion—I certainly cannot forget—that other duty which was imposed the next year with a similar intention. The corn-tax of 1902 was, according to the avowed purpose of its author, "to form part of the normal taxation of the country," or, as he said again, "part of our permanent system of taxation." This "normal permanent" tax had a brief, if eventful, life. The very next year, 1903, it was hurried by the same Cabinet which presided over its birth to an early burial—I see two of the principal gravediggers opposite—and over its grave there have ever since stalked strange spectres. With such a precedent we need not attach undue importance—certainly nothing in the nature of constraining sanctity—to the similar professions which were made about coal and sugar.

REPEAL OF THE COAL DUTY.

Now, among these taxes there is one which is singled out, not only by the pledges and the action of the Liberal Party in the last Parliament, but by its own intrinsic demerits, as an inevitable victim to be offered on the altar. Upon what ground, Sir, is an export duty on coal to be defended as a permanent part of our system of taxation? The suggestion that it has become desirable to restrict our output—there are still people who hold that view—because our reserve of potential supply is being exhausted, has been emphatically negatived by the Report of the Royal Commission. They report our available resources at 100,000 millions of tons, and our annual output at 230,000,000 tons. It is said the tax has not injuriously affected our exports inasmuch as the quantity exported, if you include bunker coal and coal equivalent of coke and patent fuel, has increased from 60,000,000 tons in 1902, to nearly 66,000,000 tons in 1904. But the Royal Commission again point to the increase of shipments as largely due to the growth in the export of the very classes of coal, bunker coal and coal which costs less than 6s. per ton, which are exempt from the tax. The balance of increase is, I believe, more than accounted for by the continued demand for the really first-class steam coal of South Wales and gas coal of Durham, in which are natural advantages which make our producers practically independant of the tax. It is in regard to the low and medium-priced coal, on which the margin of profit is smallest, that the tax has pressed so heavily on the British producer. Let me point out to the House in this connection that in the last ten years the coal production of Germany has increased by nearly 60 per cent., and in such markets as those of France, Holland, and Belgium our exports have decreased, while those of Germany have been steadily increasing. Whatever you may say about the injurious effects of foreign tariffs on British productions and British trade, surely we shall all admit that it is the height of folly by our own hand, by a fiscal arrangement not imposed upon us from outside, but voluntarily and spontaneously adopted by ourselves, to fetter our exporters in the very markets where competition is keenest. Nor is it to be forgotton that there are other interests involved in this tax. Coal is practically our only bulky export, and it is the chief commodity which supplies us with outward freight on a large scale. Anything that checks coal export checks also the activity and prosperity of our shipping trade. I might add other considerations, but these are more than sufficient to justify what I am about to propose—namely, the complete repeal of the export duty on coal. One question remains. On what date ought that repeal to take effect? The export trade in coal is carried on for the most part under contracts made in advance to provide for periodical delivery over a long period of time, in many cases twelve months. The suspicion that this tax was not likely to have a very protracted life has been long in the air, and a large proportion of the contracts now running stipulate that the foreign purchaser shall have the benefit of the remission if and when it occurs. I do not propose to incur a sacrifice of revenue for the benefit, not of our own coal producers, but of foreign buyers. The circumstances of different districts are not the same, and it is not easy to choose a date to give at the same time the maximum of benefit to the trade and the minimum of loss to the Exchequer. But after much consideration I have resolved to propose the repeal of the duty as from November 1st next. The loss to the revenue during the financial year I estimate at £1,000,000.

REDUCTION OF THE TEA DUTY.

I have still, before I have exhausted the whole of the surplus, the best part of £1,000,000 in hand. I think we are apt to treat our system of taxation too much as if it were divided into watertight compartments, as if, from the remission of one tax, one class and one class only gained, and from the remission of another tax another class and only that class gained. As a matter of fact, we are all parts of one organic and related body. If one member suffers, every other member suffers also. But, while that is perfectly true, the claim of the consumer, the rank and file of the army of industry, to some direct mitigation of the added load of recent years is clear, both on its own merits and in the interest of the State. The sugar duty is, for reasons which I have already stated, one which I should be glad to deal with; but it produces over £6,000,000 of revenue, and I am not rich enough to give it any effectual relief. Tea, which, like sugar, has become to the mass of our people a prime necessity of life, is more happily circumstanced. It is true that the duty was reduced last year from 8d. to 6d., but it is still by far the highest in proportion to its value of all the taxes levied on articles of food apart from alcohol. I have had the percentages taken out of taxation on the average values of articles charged with Customs duty in the year 1905, and they work out as follows:—Cocoa, 13 per cent.; coffee, 25 per cent.; sugar, 30 per cent.; tea, 90 per cent. And if you take the cheaper qualities of tea the percentage, of course, would be much higher. A reduction, however small—and the Committee will see that any reduction I propose must be small—in the tea duty has, as compared with other remissions of taxation, several distinct advantages of its own. In the first place, tea, being an article which does not undergo, as tobacco does, after importation, more or less elaborate processes of manufacture and manipulation, the lowering of the tax is not intercepted or delayed, but goes almost direct to the consumer. He gets the benefit at once, or almost at once, either in a lower price or, what is often of greater importance, in an improved quality of the article. During the decade 1890 to 1900, when the duty was at its lowest point—namely, 4d.—the annual consumption increased by 55,000,000 pounds, or an average of 5,500,000 pounds a year. During the five years, 1901 to 1905, when the duty had been raised to 6d., and stood for one year at 8d., the consumption increased by something over 9,000,000 pounds, or an average of something less than 2,000,000 pounds a year, showing a direct relation between the duty and the consumption. Again, an excessive duty on tea injures the producer as well as the consumer, and in this case, as I think my predecessor pointed out last year, the producer in nine cases out of ten is one of our fellow-subjects developing in India or Ceylon the resources of the British Empire. And, let me add, it is not unsatisfactory to be able to show that a small, but at least a substantial, reduction on tea is posssible without attempting or contemplating any revolutionary change in our system of free trade and without requiring the consumer to submit to a more than countervailing sacrifice in a new or added tax upon some other necessity of life, such as corn or meat. I propose that the duty shall be reduced by one penny, from 6d. to 5d., as from July 1st of the present year. Reductions of, or impositions on, the tea duty have been usually reductions or impositions of 2d. in the pound at a time; but, apart from the fact that I have not the means to suggest so large a reduction, let me remind the Committee that the duty will then stand at a lower figure than it has reached for a quarter of a century, except during the years from 1890 to 1900, when it stood at 4d. And when account is taken of the almost complete displacement in recent years of the weaker China tea by the stronger Indian and Ceylon teas, the actual burden on the consumer with the tax at 5d. will probably be as light as, if not lighter than, it has ever been before, and I am glad to think that there is no part of the United Kingdom where the relief will be more felt than in Ireland. The cost of the reduction for the year I estimate at £920,000.

THE FINAL BALANCE SHEET.

The Committee will now see how my surplus has been got rid of. I started with £3,074,000. From this has now to be deducted - Sinking Fund, £500,000; necessitous schools, £135,000; postal and telegraph services, £105,000; repeal of the coal-tax as from November 1st, £1,000,000; and reduction of the tea duty as from July 1st, £920,000—a total of £2,660,000, leaving a balance for contingencies of £414,000. The final balance-sheet which will appear to-morrow in the blank spaces of the return, will show that, as the result of these changes, the estimated revenue for the year is reduced by £2,025,000, and the estimated expenditure for the year is increased by £635,000. That will be the general result. I have only now to offer my most grateful thanks to the Committee for the patience with which they have listened to a statement of unusual, but I hope of not wholly unwarrantable, length and complexity. I have only one thing more to say. In judging of the merits or demerits of this Budget the House and the country will realise that we only came into office late in last year. As I said at the beginning of my speech, some of the governing factors in the case had already been fixed in advance, and, so far as I am personally concerned, I had little more than four months in which to survey a large tract of rough and tangled ground. I should like to see, I hope to see, more attempted and more done than I can attempt or do this year in the reduction of expenditure, in the repayment of debt, and in the readjustment of the incidence of taxation. But, within the limit of our possibilities, I have tried to do whatever I could to maintain the national credit and to deal out even justice and to preserve the balance of proportion between obligations and claims. If, as I hope will be the case, we are able in one and the same year to make a relatively large step in advance in the repayment of debt, to free a great industry from the hampering load of an unnecessary tax, and to give to the community of consumers an easier command over one of the first necessaries of life, I think we may fairly claim to have contributed a chapter not wholly unworthy to take its place in the annals of our national finance.

Alteration of Duty on Stripped Tobacco and of Drawbacks on Tobacco.

Motion made, and Question proposed, 'That for the increase of three pence per pound payable on stripped tobacco under section two of The Finance Act, 1904, there shall, as from the first day of May, nineteen hundred and six, be substituted an increase of one halfpenny per pound; and that the drawbacks allowed by the same Act on tobacco of the following description shall, as from the twenty-first day of May, nineteen hundred and six, be reduced by the substitution for the ordinary rate set out in the Table of Rates of Drawback in the Schedule to the said Act of the rate following (that is to say):—

		s.	d.
In the case of cigars . .	the lb.	3	1
" cigarettes .	"	3	0
" cut, roll, cake, or other manufactured tobacco	"	2	11
" snuff, not being offal snuff .	"	2	10

—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): It is not, as the Committee is aware, usual to enter into any controversy with the Chancellor of the Exchequer immediately after he has made his Budget statement. That statement always requires and deserves careful consideration, and it never required and never deserved more careful consideration than on the present occasion. Time is required in order that the proposals of the Government may receive adequate consideration; and I rise not to discuss in detail the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman, but to ask him for the second time to-day, and in hopes of receiving a more favourable Answer than I received before, what course he proposes to take with regard to our discussion of those proposals. The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by asking for the indulgence of the Committee, as he had to make a statement of exceptional length and exceptional complexity. I have to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon the extreme lucidity with which he developed the views which he and his friends entertain. The excellence of the speech which he has just delivered is, indeed, no surprise to those who have heard the right hon. Gentleman often before in this House. We expected no less of him; but I am sure it must have given great pleasure and be a subject of congratulation to those Members of the House who have not yet had the opportunity of hearing the right hon. Gentleman on a great and important occasion. But the very importance of that speech makes it quite obvious that the discussion of the subjects with which he dealt cannot be confined to a single night, as he seemed to hint in answer to the Question I addressed to him at Question time. Such a proposal has, as far as I know, never been made by any Chancellor of the Exchequer before. The invariable practice has been to have, on the first night of the Budget Resolutions, a discursive, but not usually a very controversial or a very long debate, it being understood that on one of the later Resolutions which the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have to move on subsequent days, there shall be, with the leave of the Chairman, a general discussion, not confined within the four corners of the Resolution, travelling over the whole field of national finance and over all the topics raised by the right hon. Gentleman. We have only got to consider what those topics were. I do not mean merely the coal-tax or the corn-tax or the various rather controversial points which the right hon. Gentleman made. But consider the earlier part of the speech, and the views he uttered upon the question of national expenditure. He has told the Committee that, from henceforth, neither he nor his colleagues mean to allow any loan, so I understand him, either for naval or military works.

MR. ASQUITH: New works.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: New naval or military works. He said, I think with great truth, that there are objections to the system under which we have been working for the last ten years; that it may possibly have rendered too easy the expenditure of money on permanent works by the great spending departments. But does he not see, and does the Committee not see, that there are great and corresponding dangers on the other side; and that to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to find some large sum of money for a military or naval work, however necessary that work might be, and to require the whole of the expenditure on that work to be found within the financial year, is to make it so difficult to carry out works, however needful, that we may be perfectly confident that needful works will be neglected? I am certain that anybody who will impartially survey the financial, the military, and the naval history of the last thirty years will see that what happened under such a system is that a Government, like the Government of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends, come in; they promise economy—a very good thing, economy—and they carry out their promise by starving absolutely necessary capital expenditure. Their successors come into office, they find that these necessary works have been neglected, and they are driven, not from any love of spending money—that and its consequences are always unpopular—but from the sheer necessities of the situation, to make up the deficiencies of their predecessors, and to do by loan what can only be done by loan, unless you are to upset the whole of the system of taxation of the country, and to impose sudden burdens on the commercial community which disturb trade, and which in the long run involve a great deal of most unnecessary expenditure. The mere fact that such a broad declaration of policy has been made by the Government itself requires most careful study; and for my part, while I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that great sacrifices should be made to keep the expenditure of the year within the finances of the year, it is absurd, in the present condition of modern invention, in face of the expenditure made by foreign countries on borrowed money, for us to expect, if we insist on never using borrowed money for these purposes, that we shall not gravely imperil the national well-being under the illusion that we are carrying out a scheme of national economy. I merely touch very lightly on some of the subjects dealt with by the right hon. Gentleman. May I ask him whether he has made any provision in his Budget for the million promised in the Education Bill?

MR. ASQUITH: Certainly not; the Bill would not in any case come into operation this year.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then, leaving that topic, may I express my surprise that to the long and interesting preface which the right hon. Gentleman made to his proposals for increasing the Sinking Fund, there was, as it appeared to me at all events, a somewhat lame and impotent conclusion? He told us, and truly, that the unfunded debt was a great national danger—he used that word, and I am not disposed to minimise it, I accept the word. He told us that the debt had not only increased, but had reached a magnitude that ought to excite our greatest concern; he told us that the actual amount of money given this year for the reduction of debt was, I think, £12,000,000, or a sum nearly approaching that figure; then he told us he thought that the country ought to make great sacrifices to increase that sum, and when the great sacrifice was announced it turned out to be not more than £500,000. I do not say that the right hon. Gentleman is wrong; but had it been my duty to make a proposal of such a modest character, I do not think I should have prefaced it with such an elaborate glorification of the self-sacrificing proposals which the House and country were asked to accept.

The right hon. Gentleman touched on the tobacco duty, a subject on which I feel myself quite incapable of either criticising the right hon. Gentleman or enlightening the Committee; it is, as he has suggested, one of the most technical in the world, and the most unfortunate absence from our debate of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer will, I am afraid, render us somewhat weak in our capacity to deal with the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman. I, at least, feel myself quite unable to supply the knowledge which we have so unhappily lost by my right hon. friend's absence. There was one point, however, as the right hon. Gentleman is modifying the tobacco duties, which I should like to ask him—Does he propose to abolish their protective character? If he had left the tobacco duty alone, perhaps I should not have asked him the question; but as he is modifying it, and as he and his friends have just committed the House of Commons to a very elaborate Resolution on the subject, I should like to know whether he interprets that Resolution as a command of the Administration of which he is a member to remove the protective character from the tobacco duty. I think nobody would deny that that protective element exists; it has long existed; it might well, I think, be left alone since it is there. But as the House has chosen to pass a Resolution on the subject, and as the right hon. Gentleman himself is modifying the duty, I suppose that if he leaves the duty alone in that particular it is, for some reason wholly inexplicable to myself, to be regarded as not being affected or touched by the Resolution which was passed. He will have to give us an explanation on this point when he deals with the question again.

The right hon. Gentleman, following in this particular all his predecessors, I think, has given us a long, elaborate, and interesting, and I would add important, essay upon national expenditure. My right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, I remember, did so in his Budget, Lord Ritchie did so when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord St. Aldwyn has done it on many occasions in this House. I, for my part, am the last person to suggest that national expenditure is not one of the most important subjects which can engage the consideration of the House; and if the right hon. Gentleman sees his way through the Estimates of next year to carry out the promise which I understood he made just now—that is to say, largely to reduce the national expenditure without interfering with the power either of our Navy or of our Army—if he really sees his way to do that, I assure him I shall be the first to be glad, and certainly no Party consideration shall prevent me from getting up in my place and saying that the right hon. Gentleman has done a great service to his country. But if he fails to do that, if he finds on examination that the enormous expenditure with which we now have to cope is expenditure which is necessary unless we are going to effect great and dangerous reductions in the Army and Navy, then I beg him to consider that the ten years during which the growth of expenditure has occurred are ten years in which the condition of our Navy and Army has been at the very root of our national position in Europe. I do not believe, unless the world forces greatly change, unless the interaction of great military and naval empires takes on a new phase, which we have no right to prophesy and which we have no ground to expect—I do not believe we can safely diminish the effective power either of our Army or of our Navy. And if that be so, I greatly fear, when the spending departments carry on the annual controversy with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it will be found that, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer is really to carry out his pledge, it will only be at the cost of national interests which are at least as important as the national interests over which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has to preside. Because, though I quite abmit, as everybody admits, that a point may be reached in national expenditure upon national defence which would weaken instead of strengthening national defence, I do not think we have reached that point, or are near it. There was one figure of which the right hon. Gentleman reminded the House which is eloquent in this matter He was complaining of the burden of our National Debt, and said it had now risen to a point at which it had never stood since the year 1871. Well, but what was the population of this country in 1871, what was its wealth in 1871, as compared with what it is now? And if without murmuring, if without national weakness, if without any serious interference with trade and industry we bore in 1871 the same debt that we bear now, surely it shows that our national finance is not in the absolutely deplorable condition which the right hon. Gentleman almost seems to suggest. I wish him well in his endeavour to reduce expenditure, I welcome every penny in reduction of expenditure which carries with it no diminution of national strength. But he has a difficult task before him. He knows the claims made by Ministers who sit near him. Does he, for instance, imagine that the claim of the Minister for Education—not the greediest of his colleagues, but still a greedy colleague—will not increase? It must increase. Then there are all the schemes on which hon. Members have been returned to this House; I will not call them dreams, I hope they may receive embodiment—but all the hopes of social reform, all the great schemes for amelioration which hon. Members sincerely desire, and which they think this Parliament will carry out. I do not believe that they can be carried out without increasing our expenditure. An hon. friend near me mentions payment of Members, but I am not going to mention that, as I do not wish to strike a controversial note at the present moment. If you look at the source of the growth of national indebtedness and the increase of national expenditure in the last thirty years outside the Army and Navy, you will find that all that increase, the whole of it, is due to the desire of this House to ameliorate the social position and to carry out great reforms in this country; and as that has cost money in the past, it will in the future, I, for my part, am anxious for national economy. Anxious as I am for national economy, I cannot bring myself to believe in any sanguine spirit that any great diminution of national expenditure is possible in the immediate future. All the forces of political life—not corrupt forces, but honest, honourable, and patriotic forces—move in the direction of increasing and not of diminishing expenditure, and when the right hon. Gentleman allowed himself more than once to sneer at those who consider that some widening of the basis of taxation has been desirable in the past, may be desirable now and will be desirable in the future—when he sneers, not in any offensive spirit, but still with a confident disbelief in this prophecy, I venture to say that the time will come, and come soon, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, probably the right hon. Gentleman himself, will have to face the claims made upon him by hon. gentlemen sitting below the gangway on the Opposition side of the House and hon. Gentlemen sitting behind him; and he will be forced, whether he desires it or not, to ask this House to reconsider the basis of national taxation which is only barely adequate for national expenditure at the present time and which, inadequate as it will be in the future, will render it impossible for the holder of the office which he so ably fills not to resurvey in a somewhat different spirit from that shown to-day the whole question of our national finance. That is all I desire to say at the present moment as to the substance of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals. All I ask him at the present time, is to say what arrangements he proposes to make for the discussion of the speech which he has just delivered, and to make some selection of the Resolutions on which the general discussion may take place. Of course, we shall not resist to-night any proposal or any Resolution which is required on financial grounds. It is absolutely necessary, as we quite well know, that certain classes of proposals made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer should receive the immediate sanction of the Committee, and whatever is necessary for the purpose I am confident that my hon. friends will give the Government without discussion and without dispute, but I hope in exchange that the right hon. Gentleman will not endeavour unduly to curtail our opportunity of debate, or deprive us of the opportunity which every Opposition up to the present has enjoyed, of thoroughly sifting the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech.

Mr. ASQUITH: In at once responding to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, I will say that nothing is further from our desire than to curtail the opportunity for general debate. I quite understand the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman has made his suggestion, and I think it has been usual to select one of the financial Resolutions as the text upon which to hang the debate, and the Resolution usually selected is, I think, that in regard to the income-tax. But it does not very much matter which one it is so long as you have one upon which a general discussion may be relevant. That is all that is really wanted, and I would suggest that if we can carry Resolutions about the taxes—the tobacco duty, the tea duty, and the continuance of the duty upon beer and foreign spirits—to-night and reserve the income-tax for to-morrow that may be convenient to all parties.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not wish to criticise the right hon. Gentleman too severely, but, if I remember rightly, last year we were allowed three days debate, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, one of which was occupied by the general discussion, and the others by debates upon specific proposals. I do not agree that we should take the tobacco duty to-night.

Mr. ASQUITH: It is necessary.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Oh, it is necessary; but I hope I shall not be considered as having consented to finish the discussion to-morrow; of course, as far as the necessary proposals and Resolutions are concerned, I quite assent to dealing with them to-night, and that the general discussion should be taken on the income-tax Resolution.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said that every one who had heard the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would recognise that the finance of the country was in perfectly safe keeping in his hands. Members for South Wales in particular were pleased with the announcement in regard to the complete repeal of the coal tax. He wished to make a reservation, however, in regard to the retention of the tax until the 1st November. It was perfectly true that many of the contracts, and especially the contracts for steam coal, were made at that time for the year following, but there were other coals to which other considerations applied, and without entering into detail now he reserved to himself the right, as representing the western portion of the coalfield of Wales, of bringing before the right hon. Gentleman at a later stage considerations which ought to weigh with him as to the difference between the various classes of coal. So far as the reduction of the tea duty was concerned, they were all very pleased to hear the announcement which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made. He was personally extremely gratified that the right hon. Gentleman had had the courage to tackle the question of the practicability of the graduation and differentiation of the income-tax. Many people had been preaching that some reform in that direction ought to have been embarked upon long before now, yet no Committee had dealt with the matter from 1861 to the present time. He was pleased not only because the right hon. Gentleman had promised to appoint a Committee to inquire into the matter, but also because he felt that those who desired reforms would have a friend in the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was the fact that in all our colonies except Canada the principles of graduation and differentiation had been followed, and in almost all the countries of Europe they were in operation and a practical method had been found of giving effect to them. He was glad that they had now a Chancellor of the Exchequer who was willing to put his hand to the plough, and he thought the Select Committee would find that the application of the principles was practicable, and enable the right hon. Gentleman to introduce a system of graduation and differentiation. Such a policy was necessary not merely for the purpose of placing the burden upon the shoulders most able to bear it, but for the purpose of exonerating those who paid income-tax at a very high rate which they could ill afford. The principle of differentiation and graduation was one which he was sure would appeal to everybody, because it was hard that people who had to work very strenuously for their incomes should be brought under the same weight of taxation as those who had incomes prepared for them by generations that had gone, and which they had inherited in the shape of funded property. He was sure the vast majority of Members were glad that the proposal had been made to appoint this Committee immediately. He hoped it would at once proceed with its labours, and that his right hon. friend would have the report and be able to make reforms at no distant date.

*Mr. PIKE PEASE (Darlington) was pleased to hear that an Income-tax Committee was to be appointed, as he believed there was a large number of people in the country at present who paid far more income-tax than they ought, persons who owned shares on whose dividends the income-tax was deducted before the dividends were paid, and who took no action to get back the money which was due to them under the existing law. Another instance of that was in reference to overdrafts at banks. In many instances people placed as security with their bankers large numbers of shares, and they might get as much as 6 per cent on them. The bank charged an interest of 4 per cent. on the money which was lent, and the income-tax was always deducted from the dividends before they were paid. In that way many people paid a considerable amount more income-tax than necessary. He sincerely trusted that some graduated form of income-tax might be arranged in the future. With regard to the coal tax, he had found it not a little difficult, being himself interested in the coal trade to vote for that tax in past years. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick, some years ago, in an interesting speech upon this question, showed that the incidence of the tax fell upon the miners and said it was a remarkable fact that if there was an import tax put on German coal coming to this country, they would be told on all hands that the tax would be paid by the consumer. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman upon having been able to cancel this tax, and he believed that the people in the North of England would receive the news with great satisfaction. Many Members wished to see a tax upon goods imported into this country. He sincerely trusted the day would come when we, as a nation, should follow the example of many foreign countries by putting taxes on foreign manufactured goods coming to our shores. He believed that that day would come, though perhaps it was some time ahead. When it did come we should be able to derive a considerable amount of revenue from that source. At the present time we did not take advantage of our opportunities and many of our manufactories were in consequence being set up in foreign countries. He believed if the Government would appoint a Royal Commission to consider the subject it would be of great advantage to the country.

*Mr. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster) said that, having presented a memorial to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking for the remission of the duty on "Strips," signed by manufacturers throughout the country, he desired to express the thanks of the tobacco trade to the Government for the alteration made with regard to that duty. He was glad of the change made in the tobacco duty, which, he was sure, would greatly benefit many struggling tradesmen and small manufacturers and avert the ruin with which they would have been threatened if the duty had continued. There was another matter to which he wished to draw attention. It was very hard that people who borrowed money from bankers for the purpose of purchasing property were not allowed to deduct the amount payable as income-tax in respect to the interest paid thereon. In the case of an ordinary mortgage they could withhold the income-tax on the interest, but bankers would not allow it as had been suggested by the authorities, because they made their profits on the difference between the interest at which money was advanced and the rate they charged their customers. He thought that was a grievance to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer might well address himself and thus relieve many borrowers from an impost which they regarded as unjust and unfair, either by departmental action, or if necessary by legislation in the Finance Bill.

SIR GEORGE DOUGHTY (Great Grimsby) congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the lucid statement he had made to the Committee, and said that with the greater part of that statement he was in agreement. There were, however, two points upon which he must express an opposite opinion. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not seen his way to give a larger grant towards education, which would have been most acceptable to the general body of the ratepayers of the country. The ratepayers had now to bear a much greater burden for education than they had ever had to bear before, and they were distinctly told a little while since that a considerable sum would be given in the Budget in relief of secondary education. As to the coal tax he was entirely opposed to its remission. He thought that what was proposed was a great mistake and a step backwards. He considered that the imposition of the tax by the late Government was a broadening of the basis of taxation which might well be followed by the present Government. The tax was not paid by either those who were engaged in getting or consuming the coal in this country. It was paid entirely by the foreigner, and, notwithstanding the tax, there had been a very considerable increase in the export of coal to various countries abroad. The tax could easily have been continued and would have produced a large amount of revenue. In 1902 the total export of coal from this country was 37,250,000 tons, and that had grown in 1905 to 48,169,000 tons, an increase of some 10,000,000. That was a total increase of some 22 per cent., and it did not look as if the tax pressed hardly or heavily on the industry. The amount produced by the tax was £1,311,000 in 1902 and £2,032,000 in 1905, and he thought it a strange thing on the part of the Government that they should give up an income of over £2,000,000 a year which was paid by the foreigner and place it on the heavily burdened taxpayer of this country.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) offered his heartiest congratulations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on having in his first Budget decided on the total abolition of that most unjust tax on coal to which reference had just been made by the hon. Member for Great Grimsby. He was really astonished at the hon. Member's remarks. He could only say that he had recently attended meetings of coal exporters all over the country, and their unanimous opinion was that the tax on coal was one of the greatest hindrances to one of the greatest trades of the country. It had to be remembered that the coal trade was one of the great industries of the country, and that no fewer than 4,000,000 of the people were dependent upon it for a livelihood. There was no question that in the case of Scottish and Durham coal our trade with countries such as France and Holland had had laid upon it for the first time a most serious competition, which, he feared, would never be driven out. The evil that men did lived after them, and though they owed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer their gratitude for having done this act of justice towards the coal trade he feared that they would not for a generation, if ever, recover the ground they had lost in the markets of the world through the folly of a British Government in putting a tax on one of our own industries in a form in which it operated actually as a bounty of 1s. a ton in favour of foreign producers when competing with British producers in certain markets of the world. He could only say, on behalf of the coal miners and the colliery owners and exporters, that they recognised that this action on the part of the Government in their first Budget showed that they were a Government who believed in the equal incidence of taxation and that they would not place on the coal trade any longer a burden that was placed on no other great industry in the country. Therefore he had risen simply to express on behalf of those with whom he had been for so long associated their gratitude that at last this measure of justice had been done to this great industry, the future prosperity would be enchanced thereby.

MR SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall) desired to add his congratulations to those already offered to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had one regret, and he believed the right hon. Gentleman had expressed it also, that he was not able to give any relief to the income-tax payer. The right hon. Gentleman had said very truly that one shilling was far too high. The income-tax was essentially a war tax, and if it were kept at one shilling in peace time where was their reserve in time of war? They were told by the predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman last year and the year before, he believed, that the income-tax payer should have the first relief of a surplus, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer to-day had said he had not enough money, as it took £2,600,000 to relieve the income-tax payer of a penny in the £. He only hoped that the inquiry which was to be set up would find some means of relieving the income-tax payer even if the right hon. Gentleman had not so much as £2,600,000 to give away. He quite admitted the Chancellor of the Exchequer's difficulty. He was sorry to say that the right hon. Gentleman was giving a good deal away in trifles, and the only substantial amounts he was able to give were in respect of the coal tax and the tea duty. He was not sure that, considering that 2d. came off the tea duty last year, the consumers of tea might not have waited another year before having further relief, although of course they were all glad to relieve those who depended so largely upon tea. With reference to the coal duty he did not share the view of the hon. Member for Grimsby. He was glad the Chancellor of the Exchequer had repealed that duty. The Report of the Royal Commission on the Supply of Coal showed that they had no need to fear that it would run out before something like 500 years. One of the main reasons why Sir Michael Hicks-Beach put on the tax was the limited character of our coal supply, and that it was good economy to store it up. That reason had entirely gone now, the country having no need to be under any apprehension on that account for many years to come. Moreover, it would be bad policy to try to economise at a time when new inventions were coming in every day. If they stored that which was of good value now, but which might not be in the future, it would not be good policy. With regard to expenditure the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given very valuable advice, but was it really a great expenditure compared with the income of the country, which had doubled during the last forty or forty-five years, though we were not paying more in taxation per head of the population than was the case one hundred years ago? He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to give the direct taxpayer, especially the income-tax payer, some relief next year both on the ground of public policy and as a matter of right.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said he would like to add his congratulations to those already given to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his very clear and able speech. He should also like to associate himself with the Leader of the Opposition in regretting the absence of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, although he entered into office under very serious conditions of expenditure and accumulations of debt, had some compensations. He had first of all the falling in of all these terminable annuities; and, secondly, the improved conditions of trade, of which, by the way, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had taken full advantage in estimating his revenue for the coming year. The right hon. Gentleman had made a very conservative estimate, though, perhaps, if he erred at all it should be on the side of safety. He had had his hands strengthened in that there had been a public demand for economy in expenditure, and it was in that direction more than in any other that they must look for a diminution of that extra burden of taxation which was imposed on the country by the late Government. He would like to make two criticisms on the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The first was with reference to his reduction of taxation. So far as the commodities were concerned the right hon. Gentleman could not have done otherwise. The coal tax seemed more than any other opposed to economic principles, and, with reference to the tea duty, seeing that the right hon. Gentleman was unable to reduce the sugar duty, which would have been even more important, being a raw material as well as an article of general consumption, he thought the right hon. Gentleman was confined to tea. He put to him, however, whether it would not have been better to have taken 2d. off instead of a 1d. If he had done that and postponed its operation it would have been very much better. It would have given the consumer a better chance of participating in the reduction. The right hon. Gentleman was to be commended for his proposal with reference to restoring the national credit, which, to use a very mild phrase, had been somewhat shattered by the proceedings of the late Government, not only with regard to the growth of ordinary expenditure, but also with regard to the war, and the way in which the late Government had borrowed for ordinary purposes of expenditure. Bankers had been alarmed and business men disturbed, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was only expressing the feeling prevalent in all business circles when he said that the way in which the State had been borrowing recently had handicapped commerce. With regard to the method which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had adopted in dealing with terminable annuities which fell out, he would beg leave humbly to differ. He at once conceded, so far as the reduction of debt was concerned, that there was no difference at all in the principle which he applied. The money in any case went to the Sinking Fund, and if they were sure of always having a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer in office, he would say that the simplest and, therefore, the best course was that which the right hon. Gentleman had proposed. As it was, the right hon. Gentleman had left a very wide open door to the next Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer. The history of the terminable annuities gave ample evidence that there was a great danger in that. If the right hon. Gentleman set up other annuities in place of those falling out he would prevent any successor from reducing the Sinking Fund until the termination of the annuities set up for, say, another twenty years. When they looked back they found that the Sinking Fund had in every case been reduced by Conservative Chancellors of the Exchequer, and they had always, with one exception, taken the occasion of the falling in of those annuities to do something. The Chancellor of the Exchequer by his proposal was really giving the next Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer an opportunity of reducing the contribution to the Sinking Fund. That was no remote contingency, because in 1890, when Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was Chancellor of the Exchequer, he anticipated the falling out of certain annuities by several years and he reduced the contribution to the Sinking Fund by £2,000,000. The reason he gave for adopting that course was that too large a Sinking Fund was a danger to succeeding Chancellors of the Exchequer and he wanted to take away the chance of dipping into that source of revenue. Lord Goschen took advantage, not of the expiry of annuities, but of the system that Mr. Childers set up of postponing the payment, and reduced the fund by £2,000,000, so that altogether the Sinking Fund had been reduced by £4,000,000 by Conservative Chancellors of the Exchequer whenever they had had the opportunity. Therefore there was a real danger in this, and while they were delighted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should make what he ventured to call adequate provision for the redemption of Debt, which would have its effect in the City and upon Consols, he nevertheless wished to point out that if the right hon. Gentleman had set up other annuities and bought Consols, say, at ninety, he would have been able to make a greater reduction of debt in that way. The Chancellor of the Exchequer when dealing with the amount of our national indebtedness had been exceedingly fair to his predecessors in office. He had shown how the debt had been increased by £136,000,000 and that the increase really ought to have been more. He had made a simple calculation of what the National Debt ought to have been to-day had the ordinary operation of the Sinking Fund gone on uninterrupted either by the war or those excessive borrowings for military and naval works loans. But for those causes the Debt would have stood at £584,000,000, and, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them, it now stood at £789,000,000, so that the National Debt to-day was nearly £205,000,000 more than it ought to have been but for the war and those borrowings upon military and naval works. Perhaps the most serious charge that they chould bring against the late administration from a financial point of view was that in 1904–5, in a year of peace, and not for war purposes but for ordinary purposes, they increased the National Debt by £2,250,000 sterling. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had made a very adequate provision for the Debt, he was laying aside £13,500,000, and there would be a net reduction of Debt amounting to some £9,000,000. That was the largest contribution that had ever been made to the reduction of the Debt, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to be congratulated upon taking this very bold step. He did hope that the right hon. Gentleman would direct his attention to retrenchment. New Members of the House had a restive feeling because they thought that the Government had not used the pruning knife as effectively as they ought to have done. According to last year's expenditure they had saved £940,000 on the Army Estimates alone, and he thought that they ought to have had a proportionate reduction of the Army Estimates for the current year. He realised that the right hon. Gentleman had had to face automatic increases in the expenditure upon the Army and the Navy on account of the policy previously adopted, but if he had looked with a more hopeful eye on the increase of revenue which he was likely to receive next year he might have given a reduction of 2d. in the £ upon tea. The only excuse which he could offer for the Chancellor of the Exchequer's producing such a conservative estimate of revenue was that he was looking to a great Budget next year, and with the increase in the revenue and a reduction in the expenditure the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take the opportunity of doing what he was asked to do by the Leader of the Opposition, namely, to broaden the basis of taxation—not in the way contemplated by the hon. Member for Gravesend, but by dealing with land and the licence duties and by adopting a progressive scheme for the reform of local taxation. They ought to do away with subventions to local authorities that were so wasteful in their operations. It had been estimated that the revenues which were intercepted for that purpose really meant that the working men put £1 into the Imperial Treasury and drew 5s. out of the local exchequer. He urged the Labour Members to keep a watchful eye upon that aspect of taxation. Next year he believed the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have such an opportunity of relieving industry from some of the shackles with which it was at present burdened, that he would be able to put taxation on a more sound and economic basis, and to relieve the pressure from the shoulders of those least able to bear. If the right hon. Gentleman had such an opportunity as Mr. Gladstone had in 1853 then he would go down to posterity as one of the great Chancellors of the Exchequer who had adorned the pages of history.

*MR. J. F MASON (Windsor) said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had left the Committee in considerable doubt as to the incidence of the coal tax. If the contention that the foreigner paid this tax was true, why should they remove it; why not let him go on paying it? If on the contrary the producer paid the tax, on what grounds could it be contended that the producer did not also pay the tax on imported wheat? The conditions as regards competition were similar in the two cases, and the economic laws governing both cases seemed to be identical. If the removal of the coal tax could be justified on the plea that it was paid by the producer, then the whole policy of opposition to the fiscal proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was entirely without justification.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said that as one who had taken part in opposing the coal tax upon every possible occasion, he would not like the debate to close without offering a word of congratulation to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, both upon his own personal account and on account of the thousands of working miners whom he had the honour to represent. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had taken the earliest possible opportunity of removing what he had always considered was not merely an unjust, but also an unfair tax, inasmuch as the miners had to pay their full share of all other taxation as well. They paid the duty on sugar, tea, and tobacco, and many of them, he was sorry to say, also paid a fair share of the duty on beer and spirits. Of all other taxation miners paid their share, but in addition to that, the exporting districts, one of which he had the honour to represent, had had a special tax levied upon their particular industry. He would ask hon. Members who represented the industrial constituencies how long they would tolerate a special tax upon any particular industry in their own division. The coal duty was not a tax that was levied upon the coal industry of the country, but it affected selected areas, namely, the exporting areas, which were picked out and penalised by means of this coal tax. The late Mr. Hanbury, in justifying this tax, called special attention to the fact that the miners who would suffer were Radicals, and were opposed to the policy of the Government that imposed the tax. During the General Election the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had said that the coal tax had not realised the expectations of the Government that imposed it, and that the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he had remained in office, intended to repeal the tax. The hon. Member congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the courage he had displayed in tackling this question. The hon. Member for Great Grimsby had called the attention of the Committee to the fact that the export of coal had increased every year since the tax was imposed, and had stated that it was impossible for anyone to say that the tax had proved injurious to the industry. He admitted that the export of coal had increased since the tax was imposed, but the Committee should remember that the rate of development prior to the imposition had not been maintained since the tax was imposed. For the ten years prior to the imposition of the coal tax the average annual rate of increase in our coal exports was 1,500,000 tons, and since the imposition of the tax the rate of development had fallen to practically only 500,000 tons, so that, with even a larger amount of capital employed, and with a larger number of workmen, they had been unable to keep up the average rate of development. He, therefore, contended that in addition to its being an unjust tax it was one of the most ridiculous taxes, from the free trade point of view, it was possible to imagine. While he sincerely congratulated his right hon. friend on having tackled the question, he regretted that the circumstances of the case were such that the tax could not cease forthwith. He was also glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had seen his way to reduce the tea duty by one penny, and in the name of the thousands of men whom he had the honour to represent, he thanked the right hon. Gentleman for what he had done. The hon. Member for Great Grimsby had declared that the coal tax was a just tax, but if he had gone a little farther north than Grimsby and stood as a candidate in Durham or Northumberland they would not have had the honour of his presence in that assembly, for not a single candidate in Durham or Northumberland had declared himself in favour of the continuation of the coal tax.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.) said he wished to join in the general chorus of congratulation to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the lucidity and ability of his long and complicated statement. He rose for the purpose of asking two or three questions relating to small points in that statement. So far as he could judge the right hon. Gentleman had taken credit to himself and the Government for having introduced the principle that no new military or naval works should be undertaken on borrowed money with the exception of unforeseen expenditure. He understood that that principle had been most clearly and emphatically laid down by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in recent years. In addition to military and naval works, there were other matters to which allusion might be made in this connection, and particularly works under the Telegraph Acts. He did not know what the policy of the Government would be in future. At no distant date there might be an extension of the buildings required for public offices, and he should like to know whether it was intended to carry out these undertakings with money voted in the Estimates. He did not wish to quarrel in any form with what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman with reference to the reduction of debt. He thought the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had fully supported the proposals which the late Chancellor of the Exchequer had made with respect to the reduction of debt, and he thought the Committee should be thankful that he had made a considerable step in that direction. The right hon. Gentleman had seemed to imply that there might be some doubt as to whether he could or could not take some of the money coming to the Treasury for the Chinese Indemnity, and whether it could be utilised for the reduction of debt. He himself understood that it had been clearly laid down by the Treasury that the whole of that indemnity was in one form or another to be directed to the repayment of debt. He hoped the money would be devoted to that purpose when it fell into the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. As to the facilities to be placed in the hands of the Postmaster-General, he was quite sure that they would be of extreme benefit to the country. He would remind the Committee that facilities which were sometimes given by the Post Office for the purpose of stimulating business had also other consequences. Members of the Committee might not look at the proposal from the point of view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because undoubtedly, a large number of Gentlemen, not only in this House but outside, viewed with very great apprehension anything like an increase in the number of unnecessary advertisements they received by post. He recently received one morning as many as thirty advertisements by post, and although that kind of business might be a fruitful source of revenue to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it was an intolerable nuisance to the people who were placed under the necessity of going through the advertisements. The right hon. Gentleman had also stated that it was his intention to appoint a strong Committee to consider the graduation of the income-tax. He should not like to take up an absolutely *non-possumus* position on that matter, but he confessed that he viewed with a very great feeling of alarm any attempt which might be made to reduce the value of that tax. Any recommendations to increase the abatements and reductions at present allowed ought to be viewed with considerable apprehension. This matter had been considered by many of the right hon. Gentlemen's predecessors, and he believed that it would be extremely difficult to introduce a system of graduation. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman before accepting any recommendation of the Committee would allow the House a full opportunity of discussing the matter. Last year or the year before, after the late Chancellor of the Exchequer had introduced the Budget, the present Prime Minister remarked that he had omitted the warning on the subject of economy which they were accustomed to receive from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but not even the greatest advocate of economy would complain of the right hon. Gentleman in that respect this afternoon. He had addressed, and most wisely addressed, to the Committee a very strong expression of opinion on the administration of the Estimates in the future. He had reminded the Committee, as he himself had done on previous occasions, that not only Ministers of the Crown but the House of Commons itself were frequently guilty of rushing into the greatest expenditure. Never was a warning from a Chancellor of the Exchequer more necessary than to-day. Within a few weeks of the assembling of Parliament a series of Resolutions were passed which, if carried into effect, would throw a very serious burden on the country. He only hoped the House of Commons as a whole would bear in mind the warning it had received from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and not attempt to force his hand in the way of increased expenditure. In conclusion, he wished to offer his congratulations to the right hon. Gentleman upon his excellent statement, and to express his sincere regret that the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer was unable to be present during the Budget statement.

* MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said he would like, as one long familiar with the tea question, as an administrator, legislator, and latterly as an agitator, to express his dissent from the view taken by the hon. Member for the Ecclesball Division of Sheffield. He was sure that those interested in the tea industry would gratefully accept the remission of the 1d. on the tea duty in the hope that the other 1d. would be taken off next year. The tea duty had two aspects: one as it affected their constituents in this country, and the other as it affected their fellow subjects, the tea planters in India and Ceylon. Nearly 2,000,000 of Indian coolies were engaged in cultivating 1,000,000 acres of tea gardens; and when the duty on tea was raised some years ago it affected both the tea producers in the East and tea consumers in this country There was no country in the world, with the exception of Russia, France and Italy, which taxed tea to the same rate as we taxed our own tea in this country; and he hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would bear that in mind next year and take off the other 1d. He urged this in behalf of the producer in India and Ceylon, who

had been very hard hit by the increased tax and also by the Indian currency legislation. The planter paid for his labour in silver and sold his tea for gold, and now he got fifteen rupees instead of eighteen or more for every sovereign. It was said that gold prices would so appreciate as to redress the balance, but they had not done so. He did not oppose the currency legislation of the Government of India, which was inevitable, but he did say the planter was hit all round. He was no agitator and was not well represented in the House. He hoped the 1d. reduction would result in a fall in retail prices; at any rate it was a step in the right direction, and tea had half of the whole amount available for reduction. He could not follow those who asked for 2d. or nothing, and he did not intend to move an Amendment to that effect.

Mr. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) wished to say a few words as to sugar, with the claims of which he had a good deal more sympathy than with the interests of tea and coal. The proposal to get rid of the coal tax left him far from enthusiastic, because he represented those who were entirely consumers and not producers of coal. He thought that the claim of tea for a remission of taxation stood in an inferior position to that of sugar, because tea had received a remission last year, and the right hon. Gentleman had reminded the Committee that the reduction of the tea duty to the 6d. limit was quite a modern scheme of taxation. There was this differentiation between tea and sugar, inasmuch as the latter was a raw material of many British industries. He hoped that the claim of sugar would be considered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the future, as it constituted not only an article of food but was the raw material for many British industries. It had always seemed strange to him that when the duty on sugar was re-imposed a few years ago the duty on manufactured confectionery imported from abroad was at the same rate as on the raw material. Why should not the same principle have been adopted as in the case of tobacco and a higher duty imposed on manufactured confectionery, and so have given some assistance to the manufacturers in this country? It was quite true that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that there were arithmetical difficulties in the way of giving relief to sugar. The total duty realised on sugar last year was £6,180,000. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer were to knock off a quarter of that sum, it would take about £1,500,000 of the right hon. Gentleman's surplus. That would make the tax 3s. 0½d. instead of 4s. 2d. It was true that the right hon. Gentleman could not at the same time give a reduction on tea, but for the reasons he had ventured to give, he submitted the claims of sugar were higher than those of tea in the present year, and, regretting as he did that the coal tax had been removed, he considered that the sugar trade and the industries dependent upon it should have received more consideration.

*Mr. J. BETHELL (Essex, Romford) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer how he proposed to allocate the sum which he had provided for the necessitous school districts.

Mr. ASQUITH: The principle upon which the Government are proceeding is this. In the case of an education authority whose expenditure to be met by the rate exceeds the produce of a 1s. 6d. rate, a grant will be made out of the Exchequer of three-fourths of the excess. Take, for example, West Ham. There the expenditure to be met by rates in excess of the 1s. 6d. rate is £63,612, and there will be a special grant of £47,709, with the result that the rate which is now 29·9 will be reduced to 21·9. In East Ham the expenditure in excess is £21,916; the special grant of three-quarters will be £16,437, with the result that the present rate of 29·2 will be reduced to 20·8. In Walthamstow the excess is £22,000 odd, and the special grant of £16,000 will reduce the rate from 30·6 to 21·1. At Edmonton the excess is £13,000; the grant will be £9,700, and the reduction from 33 to 21·7.

Mr. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): Will this provision apply to Scotland?

Mr. ASQUITH: No, Sir, it does not apply to Scotland.

Mr. YOUNGER: May I ask why not?

MR. ASQUITH: I was not aware that there was any demand for it from Scotland.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said he was glad to hear the speech which the right hon. Gentleman had made, as he considered the proposals which he had placed before the House were exceedingly wise and well considered. There was one point to which he should like to call special attention, and that was that the right hon. Gentleman had resisted any temptation to make some large and popular reduction of taxation and had recognised that one of the sound principles of finance was to reduce debt as rapidly as possible. He was sorry to say that he remembered that when he was first a Member of this House there were a certain number of people who used to go about the country with long faces saying that it was a disastrous thing that there were so few Consols left upon the market, so that there were none available for the investment of trust funds. He, however, was one of those who considered that it was sound finance for the individual, and also for the State, that they should pay their way as far as they could and refrain from borrowing. He thought the country would be an enormous gainer if there were no Consols at all, and he held that the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to devote a portion of his surplus to the reduction of debt was one which should receive the support of the Committee. Another portion of the right hon. Gentleman's speech which he was glad to hear was that in which he said that he intended in the future to resist to the uttermost of his power loans for naval and military works, to be repaid after a certain number of years. He thought that was an extremely dangerous form of legislation and an extremely dangerous way of borrowing money. We lived in days when events moved very quickly. Fresh inventions came out every day and science was developing very rapidly. It was perfectly obvious, therefore, in regard to naval and military works that what might be considered extremely necessary in one year might in the course of three or four years be absolutely useless. He thought, however, that there was another object for which money could be borrowed for either short or long periods. It was another of the reasons why the Chancellor of the Exchequer should reduce debt, that the Government of this country should be able to obtain cheap money in connection with a certain class of loan. He meant those loans which had to be contracted either by the State or by local bodies for the purpose of ameliorating the social condition of the people. It was perfectly impossible that any of the schemes for getting the people back to the land or for the housing of the working classes could be carried out unless they obtained cheap money, and it was therefore most important that our finances should be so regulated that money could be obtained at as low a rate of interest as possible in order to provide for those works. Therefore as regarded the question of reducing the debt he viewed the speech of the right hon. Gentleman with the greatest pleasure, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman's resolve in this respect would not during the next year or two be in any way weakened. It was a consolation to him that the Government obtained such a large majority at the last election, as he had always considered that a Government which had a large majority at their back were in a much better position to resist any demands which might be made upon them by any section of their following, and to resist demands for large expenditure which would seriously hamper the interests of the country. It frequently happened in debates that hon. Members got up and advocated the reduction of the tea duty, the income-tax, and other taxes. They spoke very much of the value of economy, and what a scandal it was that the country should be spending this large amount of money. Yet it frequently happened that a few days afterwards the same hon. Members would be addressing the House and advocating some useless expenditure. He was glad also that the Chancellor of the Exchequer recognised the fact which must be recognised by all people who had looked into the finances of the country, that any tax which was imposed was certain to be a tax upon our industries here, and would prevent the development of industry and the use of capital. He had always maintained that taxes must have the effect of reducing employment and reducing the amount of capital which could be properly invested to employ men and further the industries of the country. The most important point of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was the proposal to abolish the duty on coal. He, for one, was very pleased that it was the intention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take this step, and he was not surprised that he should have done so, because he understood that during the right hon. Gentleman's election campaign this was one of the points on which he had distinctly pledged himself to his constituents. Although he did not think there was a single coal miner in his constituency, he was glad that the tax was to be removed, as he believed that it was a tax upon the producer. What had happened was that the miners and coal owners in this country paid the tax and the foreigners who bought the coal paid exactly the same price for the coal as if the tax had not been imposed. He had always thought the tax fell upon the producers in this country, and therefore he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman proposed to abolish it, because it showed that we had now a Chancellor of the Exchequei who had a clear idea of the incidence of taxation. With regard to the small changes the right hon. Gentleman was going to make in the postal arrangements, he understood that he now proposed to deliver letters at every place in the United Kingdom three times a week. He was afraid the right hon. Gentleman would find some difficulty in carrying out that proposal, but he should vote for it because, although it might entail some loss to the Exchequer, he thought it was only right that people who lived in out of the way places and who only had one delivery a week should be brought into closer touch with civilisation. At the same time he would like the right hon. Gentleman to urge on the Postmaster-General the desirability of inquiring into the question of the service of rural districts where there were two or three posts a day. In his opinion the second post was one of the curses of civilisation. There should be a delivery as early as possible in the morning, and the post should leave as late as possible at night. The majority of the people in the rural districts felt that when they had received their morning's delivery, they should be done and finished with letters for the day and that they should not receive a post at two o'clock or five o'clock in the afternoon. If the right hon. Gentleman would look into this matter and argue it out with the Postmaster-General, he would find that in many rural districts there were two or three deliveries in the day, which must cost money and which the people in the district did not consider of any use. If the right hon. Gentleman could reduce those deliveries to one and spend the money saved in giving more deliveries to those people who received only one post a week, he would be responsible for a very great reform. With regard to the proposed reduction of 1d. per lb. on tea, he believed that the people who got the worst and most unfair treatment in this respect were the poorest of the population—the people who bought their tea in very small quantities. A man who was able to buy his tea by the chest or in large quantities could usually insist on being treated fairly by the tea dealer. The question he desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman was, would this penny only benefit the seller, or did the right hon. Gentleman think that by this reduction of the duty he was going to reduce the price of tea to those who could only purchase tea in small quantities ?

MR. ASQUITH: Or improve the quality.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY was doubtful whether the reduction would achieve either of those results, in which case the right hon. Gentleman would have done far better by leaving the duty alone until he could give a reduction which would benefit these poor persons. In conclusion, with these exceptions he could only repeat what he had said before, that he believed the wise and sound policy of steadily reducing the debt of this country and at the same time attempting to reduce the taxes would be the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, who would not allow himself to be made a party to any great expenditure which would lead to heavy taxation being levied which, though it was levied upon the rich alone, must in the long run react on the commerce and the producers of this country.

MR. C. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central) congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon his Budget, which he thought was the first honest Budget for many years, and differed in that respect from that introduced by the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer last year, which was absolutely dishonest and misleading in many respects. He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not seen his way to do something to alter the conditions of the floating debt of the country. In his opinion it would have been a good thing if that could have been solidified and added to the National Debt. Owing to there being so much floating debt it was difficult to understand what really was the condition of the debt of the country. He was glad, however, that the amount earmarked for the reduction of debt was to be increased. He was exceedingly sorry that the right hon. Gentleman had not made the reduction on tea 2d. instead of 1d., because that would have benefited the consumer, and he was perfectly certain that the consumers would not get the benefit of the reduction proposed. He strongly urged that before the Budget was carried through this reduction should be made 2d., because everyone who had anything to do with the increase and reduction of the price of eatables knew that these small reductions did not benefit the consumers in any degree.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) thought the position most Members on the Unionist side took up was not that the proposals of the Budget were bad but that possibly they might have been better. He regretted to hear the hon. Member for Central Edinburgh say the Budget of the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer was dishonest. It was not the fact, and he thought it very offensive on the part of the hon. Member to have applied such a term to his right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. What the Committee had now to consider was whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made the best use of his surplus. He should be sorry to think that he had made the worst use of it, but he was not sure he had made the best use of it. Greater experts than he doubted whether the reduction of 1d. on tea would benefit the poorest classes, and that being so he would like to have seen a better test of the good intentions of the right hon. Gentleman. As to the abolition of the tax on exported coal, he was not quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman had made a wise selection. On the right hon. Gentleman's own showing the result of the arrangements made after the imposition of the tax had been that the foreigner who bought the coal had practically paid the extra price necessitated by the tax. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say, however, that this tax did press rather hardly upon a type of coal that was not of the best; but at the same time he laid it down very clearly that this tax did not in any way interfere with the export of the best coal, of which this country had a monopoly. If it was true that foreign consumers must buy this best type of coal, and if it was allowed that our store of coal, though very large, was to a certain extent the life blood of the mining interest of this country—if all that was true, would it not have been better to have retained the tax and to have applied the amount of income received from it to the reduction of some other tax which would be better for the well-being of the people of this country, who had a right to look for every remission when there was any money to spare? He remembered many years ago the present Lord Goschen laying down the proposition that the first duty of a Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be to consider how he could, as far as possible, broaden the basis of taxation and increase the sources of revenue rather than dry up altogether any of the present sources. He argued that although they might reduce a certain tax they should not get rid of it altogether, because by keeping open numerous sources taxation would be fairer. In his Budget statement the right hon. Gentleman appeared to have lost sight of the importance of not drying up any source of taxation, and to that extent he had departed from the wise principle laid down by Lord Goschen. The effect of the abolition of the coal tax would be to take money out of the pockets of the people in this country to relieve their foreign rivals of a slight contribution to our revenue, and it would also narrow instead of broaden the basis of taxation. He should have thought that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have recognised that the income-tax had a greater claim to a reduction than a proposal to narrow the basis of taxation. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman had made the best use of his surplus, and while hon. Members had spoken with gratitude of the assistance given to the coal-mining industry he had not heard a word of regret that the agricultural industry was not to get the slightest benefit or help. The great blessings which according to the Prime Minister were to accrue to agricultural districts, and which figured so largely in the Prime Minister's election address, were not advanced by a single inch under this Budget. It would have been a far wiser policy if a portion of the surplus had been devoted to carrying out some of the promises made by hon. Gentlemen opposite during the election. He was not quite clear whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer intended to advance loans to local authorities at a lower rate of interest. If so, he agreed that that would be a benefit to certain rural developments which they would all like to see carried out. Had the right hon. Gentleman held out any promise that such would be the case? If so, he would like to know to what extent the rate of interest would be lowered. He would reserve any further criticisms upon details, and in conclusion he desired to say that he did not think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made the best use of his opportunities, for he might have made a wiser selection for the remission of taxation. At any rate he could not promise the right hon. Gentleman much gratitude or many expressions of satisfaction on behalf of the large agricultural and rural districts which would be affected by the Budget.

*Mr. HOLDEN (Lancashire, Heywood) said he was not directly interested in tea, sugar, or coal, but he was interested in the general financial position of the country, and he would like to deal with that in his maiden speech. He had followed closely the figures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as he was somewhat of a pessimist with regard to them, he was not very sanguine as to a future revenue. He was also pessimistic about the estimated expenditure which the right hon. Gentleman had estimated at £246,000 less than last year. The question arose whether this decrease was an actual retrenchment or an actual economy. He did not think it was either. In the Navy Estimates in 1904, the stock of Naval stores was £4,188,000, in 1905 £4,600,000 and in 1906 £4,700,000. In the Estimates for 1907 those stores had fallen to £4,000,000, showing clearly that they were working out of stock. That was not real retrenchment, and he urged on the right hon. Gentleman the necessity of watching these stock accounts, because it was on the cordite stock account the last Liberal Government fell. It would be a very good thing if he ordered a general stock-taking for the whole country, not only as to quantity, but as to quality, so that he might commence on solid ground. They had heard that it was absolutely necessary that the unfunded debt should be reduced as quickly as possible. If that was a dangerous debt because it was payable at short dates, then they must also consider that the debts which were incurred by the National Debt Commissioners and the Postmaster-General would also be dangerous debts under certain circumstances. That liability amounted to £150,000,000, against which they were told that this country held £100,000,000 Consols and other stocks, and £50,000,000 annuities. But before accepting this as satisfactory they wanted to know the market price of the stocks held against the Post Office debt. In 1898 the surplus market value of those stocks was £11,000,000, but in 1903 there was a deficiency on this account of £11,000,000. The last Parliament passed an Act that the Postmaster-General should be relieved from the statutory obligation of publishing a balance sheet on the ground that it would be misleading. It would certainly be misleading if the stocks were not entered at their market value. If there was a deficiency in this account, and the nation was responsible for it, they ought to know what it was. He sincerely hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not continue the style of finance adopted by the late Government, and would not take advantage of the Act permitting him to withhold a balance sheet. On the contrary he begged of him to commence his financial career by making provision for this deficiency, and by publishing the balance sheet redeem the character of the House for sound finance. He was pleased that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was keeping liquid a portion of the annuities. If he would take out of these annuities £1,000,000 sterling per annum and create a Sinking Fund until it was equal to the deficiency, he would then place the savings bank business on a sound foundation. He would also render great service to the country if he would invest that Sinking Fund in gold as opportunities presented themselves, so that at the end of ten years there would be a gold reserve to meet liabilities. The transactions which took place at all our commercial exchanges amounted to about £15,000,000,000 per annum, by the exchange of pieces of paper, whether bills or cheques—all received on the understanding that they were payable in gold. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take the opportunity of putting the deficiency right, and of creating a reserve of gold amounting to £10,000,000 sterling to meet the general indebtedness in case of necessity, he would earn the gratitude of the whole of the financial community of this country.

*MR. WARDLE (Stockport) said he was not, like the last speaker, a pessimist with regard to the progress of this country on its financial side. He was interested, as was every Member of the Committee, in the comparisons drawn by the Chancellor of the Exchequer between population and expenditure, but there were one or two other comparisons which he would have liked the right hon. Gentleman to have given, but which, whether purposely or not he did not know, were certainly withheld from the Committee. There was the question of the income of the country, and the growing wealth of the country. While the expenditure had increased by 39 per cent. and the population by 10 per cent., he thought it would be found that notwithstanding all the money that was wasted during the South African war, the wealth of the country had been increasing by £200,000,000 per year, and that therefore the country was not in the bad position some people would have them believe. Undoubtedly there would come from the benches below the gangway demands for increased expenditure in certain directions on behalf of social reform. One of the demands—that for old age pensions—would be pressed most strongly. They had been told time after time that the money for these things could not be raised, and they were invited by the noble Lord who had spoken a short time ago to resist every demand for increased expenditure. The noble Lord had said the country was oppressed by the load under which it staggered, and the Committee were also invited by the right hon. and gallant Member for the Newport Division of Shropshire to look at the question from the point of view of the broadening of the basis of taxation. He would venture to suggest two or three sources of income that were open to the Chancellor of the Exchequer without in any way broadening the basis of taxation. One of those sources was hinted at by the last speaker. He referred to the question of banking, and he ventured to suggest that as municipalities had found it necessary on various occasions to get out of the hands of the financiers and the money-lenders, it would be for the general good of the country if the State took over the business of banking and used the profits on behalf of the whole community. He would like to suggest that if they could get a Chancellor of the Exchequer with imagination enough he would find in the income which might be derived from the nationalisation of the railways of this country an enormous fund which might be used for the purposes of old age pensions and various other social reforms. In thirty years every penny subscribed by the shareholders of the railways of this country had been paid back, and they still owned the original amount and a large sum of watered capital besides. The income of the shareholders amounted to £40,000,000 a year. In Germany about £22,000,000 was provided by the railways for the relief of taxation, to the general advantage of the State. So that when hon. Members said they must either broaden the basis of taxation or find other sources of income, he told them there were other sources waiting at the moment to be tapped, and it seemed that what was wanted was sufficient imagination in some Chancellor of the Exchequer to convert the great railways in this country to the public use. Of course, there would be other subsidiary advantages, but in the main it would be a nucleus from which a fund could be formed to provide for matters of social reform. A great deal had been heard about another matter, namely, mining rents and royalties. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer when looking about for new sources of income might put a tax on these rents and royalties, and the sooner he did so the sooner would the pledges which candidates gave during the general election be fulfilled. It seemed to him that more advantage would have been conferred on the community by taking the tax off sugar instead of by reducing the tax on tea. Sugar was the raw material of certain industries and it was far more important that it should be free from taxation than that a penny should be taken off the tea duty. On the whole he did not think they could have expected more from the Chancellor of the Exchequer who had only been four months in office. He hoped that before this Parliament had finished its course some of the greater questions which he had referred to would be tackled, and that something would be done in the way of social reform.

MR. W. H. LEVER (Cheshire, Wirral) congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his proposals, especially in regard to the reduction of the National Debt. In his opinion, the nationalisation of the railways would result in a loss of revenue to the State, though it would certainly benefit the shareholders. He did not believe that money for an old age pension scheme could be obtained by that means. He would rather advocate the nationalisation of canals, and the providing of improved facilities for motor traffic. If that were done the rates for the carriage of goods would fall, and anyone who wished to buy railway stock ten years afterwards would not have to pay the price which the Government would have to pay for the railways if they were bought by the State now. There were other sources from which income might be derived. There was a strong desire that the pledges which had been given with regard to old age pensions should be redeemed. He rejoiced that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised an inquiry into the question of the graduation of the income-tax. Reference had been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the difficulties which were said to prevail in regard to the graduation of the income-tax, and one speaker who had taken part in the debate had said that it was perfectly impossible. He himself agreed that discrimination should be made between incomes which were derived from investments and those which came from daily toil, either by the hand or the head. They should differentiate between the incomes from investments which survived the death of the owners, and incomes which ceased with the death of the wage-earner. He ventured to say that if they would combine these two principles they would have a basis of taxation which would be perfectly fair to all classes of the community. By having a graduated income-tax and collecting it at the source and by doing away with the system of rebates that now existed, it would be possible to collect on the highest scale from wealthy companies making the largest profits, and in that way they would make a distinction between the wage-earners and the dividend receivers. It would work out in this way. Supposing a person had an investment in a large corporation, although his income might be below the amount ordinarily assessable, he would pay on that income on the highest scale because he enjoyed all the security which the large corporation gave, and the high rate of dividend which it paid. He did not think there was any other system on which a graduated income-tax would be available for the purpose of producing any considerable increase of revenue. If they had a graduation of the income-tax he thought they should commence with a tax of 2d. on incomes of £1 a week and tax the wealthy on the highest scale. They would then get sufficient money not only for old-age pensions, but also for other social reforms. He was confident that those who contributed on the larger scale would be doing no more than bare justice, and they would be performing an obligation resting upon them.

*MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) said that earlier in the debate reference was made to the fact that some foreign countries had a graduated income-tax. He knew that the effect of a graduated income-tax in Switzerland was that people who possessed incomes approaching large proportions lived out of the country for the whole of the year except eighty-nine days, and their incomes were spent in Italy and elsewhere instead of in their own country. That did not make for the welfare of the country. If a system of graduated income-tax was introduced, legitimate methods of evading payment would be devised which it was not now worth while to adopt.

He trusted that if a graduated income-tax were introduced it would be in such a way that capital would not be driven out of the country, and that a premium would not be put on evasion. As to the tea duty he had hoped that if a reduction was to be made, the whole system of levying the duty would be altered. It seemed to him to be an appalling thing that the duty on tea dust which was the luxury of the working man should be equal to 330 per cent. of its value, while those who bought a 3s. tea only paid 14 per cent. on its value. Why should not the right hon. Gentleman impose an *ad valorem* duty on tea? Of course there were difficulties in introducing an *ad valorem* duty, but these should be faced rather than continue the present rotten system. He dared say that it would involve the engagement of a staff of experts, but he should say that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer could afford to take off a penny from the tea-tax, he might engage a staff which could provide a better principle of charging the duty than at present. In the main he did not think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was likely to be hardly dealt with by hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House. It seemed to him that in many ways this was a most excellent Budget. He was sure that on the Opposition side of the House it would not be criticised in the disgraceful manner in which an hon. Gentleman on the Liberal Benches had described the Budget of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. Members of the Opposition were not in the habit of using the sort of epithets which an hon. Member on the Liberal Benches had employed in the absence of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to a Budget which was one of the best and most intelligent ever placed before the country, and which was received with admiration by the whole country. He ventured to say that the Budget statement of the right hon. Member for East Fife would receive more considerate treatment at the hands of the Opposition, and he thought that they might consider it as in the main a satisfactory statement. It was a great consolation to them that the handsome surplus placed at the disposal of the right hon. Gentleman was largely the result of the excellent conduct of public affairs by the late Government.

*MR. W. JOHNSON (Warwickshire, Nuneaton) said that the hon. Member for St. Albans had argued strongly against a graduated income-tax, contending that it would not work out properly. But directly afterwards he had said that the poor man's tea dust should be taxed more lightly than the rich man's tea which cost 3s. or 4s. a pound. That was a graduated tea-tax; and if the poor man was let off on account of his tea, why not on account of his income? The hon. Gentleman could not argue logically for a graduated tax on tea and against a graduated income-tax. He was glad that the coal duty was to be abolished, because he knew that it had reduced the wages of miners throughout the country, and that it was one of the most grievous burdens that trade had had to bear. He would suggest to the hon. Member who objected to the removal of the coal duty to go down to South Wales, to Durham, and to Scotland, where he would be told that the coal-tax had interfered with the trade of the country, and that many contracts for the supply of coal abroad had been lost through it. He believed that the hon. Member opposite was an owner of mining royalties and a very wealthy landowner, and he suggested that a provision might be made for old-age pensions by a land-tax and a tax on mining royalties. As the son of a father who had to keep a family upon 12s. a week he knew what it was for the small wage-earners to be taxed. They were taxed already sufficiently by indirect taxation, and the sooner it was removed the better. They could only put the sympathy which they professed with the working-classes into practical effect by giving them a larger income which would procure for them better homes and surroundings, better education for their children, more leisure for themselves, and, in their old age, something better than the workhouse.

*MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton) desired to join in the general tribute paid to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He felt sure that the Budget when it became known in the City of London would have a good effect upon the credit of the country. It had been well thought out, and it was based on broad and sound lines. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had placed his finger on the weak spots of the national balance-sheet, from which the credit of the country had been suffering during the last few years. He had stated that the naval and military expenditure was no longer to be paid for out of borrowed money. The £41,000,000 under this head was to be greatly reduced. He had stated that the Unfunded Debt, a debt which ought never to have been allowed to approach the enormous sum of £71,000,000, was now to receive more careful attention, and he had promised a reduction of £7,000,000 next year. Such reduction could not fail to be attended with good consequences to our credit. If there was one thing which had pressed upon the credit of the country during the past few years it had been the existence of that £71,000,000. It had absorbed the liquid finances of the country which would otherwise have been available for the ordinary purposes of trade. There was another point the right hon. Gentleman had dealt with. Taxpayers were all shareholders in the great company of the British Empire; and everyone had a right to be shown a true statement of debtor and creditor, a statement which should contain each item of expenditure and receipt which the nation incurred or received. He was delighted to hear that the Chancellor of the Exchequer intended to abolish the appropriations in aid and other undisclosed accounts which had hitherto been omitted from our balance-sheet and thus obscured its whole meaning from any person who endeavoured to understand exactly how the nation stood. Anyone who was versed in the study of finance must have unqualified praise for the general statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He would like to say a few words in impartial criticism as to the method by which he had disposed of the surplus. He could have wished to see the balance of the money given to reduce the taxation on sugar rather than upon tea, or the abolition of the coal-tax. Sugar was food; tea was not, although we put it inside us. Sugar was raw material to many of our industries, but tea was not raw material to anything ;—unless it was indigestion! Though any tax must be a hindrance to the trade of the product upon which it was imposed, at the same time of all taxation imposed upon commodities probably the last he would be inclined to touch would be the tax upon coal—for the reason that he did not think it was by any means clear that the people of this country had paid it. He admitted that the tax upon coal must have been a hindrance to the mining industry and had probably caused, to a slight extent, a decrease in wages, but he did not think it made any difference whether the tax was put on here or the other side of the sea, as to whether the producer or the consumer paid the bulk of it. There was a statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer which rather bore out that statement. The right hon. Gentleman had declared that in many contracts made for the sale of coal there was a clause to the effect that the foreign buyer should have the benefit of the remission of the tax if, and when, it occurred. But why should the foreign buyer have the benefit of the remission of a tax, if and when it occurred, unless he paid it now? He did not wish to press the point. He wished to see all these indirect taxes taken off sooner or later, but he urged that if there were a tax which in his opinion should be left on until the last, it was the tax upon coal.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) complimented the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon his extraordinarily lucid statement. If they were to have a Budget of the conventional and orthodox kind to which the country had been accustomed for a good many years, he could not imagine a Budget that would appeal more to those who sat upon the Ministerial side of the House than the present one. From first to last it was an exposition by a master of exposition. All who sat upon the Opposition side acknowledged the immense ability, the high political character, and the extraordinary command of detail and generalisation possessed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but having said that he thought he detected one or two remarkable contradictions in the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. It was, he ventured to say, a Budget which would not cause great astonishment in the country. It was a Budget which, he thought, had been expected. So long as they retained the habit of taxing a very few articles of consumption, and those articles principally food and drink, a Chancellor of the Exchequer had very small room in which to swing his economic cat. He must play see-saw with the few objects of taxation, and they had had that see-saw through a great many years by Conservative Chancellors of the Exchequer, and now they had a similar Budget from a Radical Chancellor. After all, what did this Budget do? There was a certain reduction for which all were grateful, upon tea; but the hon. Member who had just sat down had suggested that there might have been a reduction to greater advantage upon sugar. There was the see-saw. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself had admitted that a reduction upon sugar would perhaps be of greater advantage to the manufacturer, since sugar was a raw material; but instead of taking the tax off sugar it was to be taken off tea, and he ventured to say that if the late Chancellor of the Exchequer had been in the position of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer to-day, he would have done exactly the same thing, and have see-sawed from one object of taxation to another, with no direct change so far as the general effect was concerned, but a direct change so far as the individual object of taxation was concerned. As to the coal tax he could not understand how hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House reconciled their views concerning it. Personally he had always been opposed to export taxes of every kind, and there was scarcely a Protectionist community which did not hold practically similar views. The United States in its constitution prohibited any export tax being put upon any product of manufacture or natural product going out of that country. Why? For the simple reason that they considered that a tax put upon goods coming into the country had a certain restrictive effect upon competition. He voted for the coal tax—and a good many others had been as guilty of inconsistencies in the House—for the reason that he now voted for a tax upon tea and sugar, because so long as we continued the present method of taxation, those who thought as he did must give their votes in favour of certain forms of taxation to which they were actually opposed. He had supported the coal tax because we needed the money, and so long as we had a system of taxation narrow in form, they were bound to support it until the country changed the system pursued by Governments of both sides of politics. He had supported the coal tax, but they could not have the effect of that tax both ways. Some said it was the producer who paid the tax, and if that was so the contention that it was paid by the consumer fell to the ground. He was, however, opposed to the principle of the coal tax, because it had a certain restrictive effect on the trade. He would put taxes on other articles which were excluded from the purview of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because they would have a restrictive effect on competitive importations and at the same time would yield revenue. The coal tax was not analagous to the shilling tax which was put upon corn, and which was taken off without any reason whatever. If that tax had been maintained it would have given us £2,500,000 revenue without any appreciable effect on the cost of living in this country. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been extremely fortunate. Every one had been delighted with the result of last year's operations in taxation. Through the past year's operations there had been an estimated surplus of £3,000,000, and on the Budget of last year there had been a saving of £422,000. Did the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen opposite take credit for the whole of that saving on the one hand and all the surplus on the other? The Budget which the right hon. Gentleman had been able to present was the result, as he himself had acknowledged, of operations which began before he became Chancellor of the Exchequer—the result of a year of savings and careful expenditure, as he himself would admit, largely of operations he had not initiated. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had boasted of the return to thrifty and economical administration. For thrift and economy the right hon. Gentleman's Budget would hardly set the Thames on fire. It was true the right hon. Gentleman held out hopes of future reductions in national expenditure. Though he had not had time to consider large schemes of reform of administration and large and wide methods of economy which would result in substantial reductions in the expenditure of the country, he did not think that would come so speedily as the right hon Gentleman imagined. The right hon. Gentleman had also hinted at raising money by increasing the taxation on the liquor trade. That trade was already taxed up to the utmost limits. If hon. Gentlemen opposite said abolish the licence trade altogether and be prepared to make up the revenue of £34,000,000 got from it by other reasonable means, he would vote with them if it was believed it could be done legitimately, but because there was a trade which would yield revenue it did not follow that it should be taxed to yield the highest possible revenue. There were some who believed with regard to the liquor trade that the tongue of the buckle had been drawn to the last hole. A land tax had also been suggested as a means of raising revenue. Something might be said for taxing land values, but that was not a problem that could be worked out on principles alone. It would have to be worked out through a series of complicated and conflicting interests and claims, and hon. Gentlemen who represented rural constituencies would have to give very careful consideration to any proposals to tax land which at present did not pay the landlord, the farmer, or the labourer. They must look in other directions for the revenue to meet the constantly growing expenditure of the country. Did hon. Members opposite believe they were going to curb in any great degree the growing expenditure of the country? The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out that despite the 10 per cent. increase of our population in ten years, and the necessary increase in the expenditure in all Civil Service departments consequent on the increase of population, the increase in expenditure had only been £9,000,000. That was an extremely small increase. The largest item of general increase had been in regard to education, a matter of 60 per cent. Hon. Members opposite were now embarking on a scheme of education much larger than any which preceded it, if the Bill now before the House passed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer could not remove expenditure by a magic wand, and turn to the Army and the Navy and the vast expenditure upon those services as an object for reduction. No one would dispute the fact that our Army and our Navy were nominally for the defence of territory, but just as really for the preservation of our trade routes to the other Colonies and the open markets in the East. The Colonies had cost this country nothing save for the operations of the Army and Navy in the acquisition of territory in which those Colonies themselves had no voice. If this country undertook the acquisition of territory in order to build up an empire, that was her business and she must pay for it. Since, however, the country had acquired that territory, these Colonies had paid for their upkeep.

MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): Is the Uganda Railway a Naval or Military operation?

*SIR GILBERT PARKER pointed out that Uganda was not a Colony. Uganda, as yet, was worked as a territory under Britishers, who were not Colonists, but who were occupying the country and enlarging their fortunes. When that territory became a Colony it would take care of itself. He did not, however, want to enter upon a wide discussion of the action of the British Empire through the Treasury, nor would he have mentioned the subject had not the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, with something of an air of disparagement and with something of a suggestion of over expenditure upon our Colonies, alluded to the subject and seemed to want the House to believe that we could reduce the cost of the Empire in this direction through the operations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Cabinet. He did not think it could be done in that way, and he was one of those who believed that as the years went on—it might be two, three, four or five years—it would be found by this House and the country that the narrow field in which our taxation operated was a field which had been fully taken up and was exhausted. Moreover, its operation pressed heavily upon the poor man. There was another form of taxation which pressed very heavily upon the poor man and that was the inelastic taxation of food. [MINISTERIAL cheers.] He knew what hon. Members meant by that cheer. They suggested that a shilling tax on corn pressed heavily upon the poor. But he would remark that while that shilling tax was in operation the food of no one in this country cost more. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."] At any rate hon. Members would admit that there was a doubt. [Cries of "No."] There was no doubt however about the heavy taxes which the poor man paid upon tea, sugar, coffee, cocoa and tobacco. These were, as he had said, inelastic, and afforded no chance that the man who produced these articles in a foreign country should pay any portion of them. Why? Because we did not grow these things in this country, consequently the effect of those taxes was severe, rigid, and inelastic. He believed that the time would come when the majority of the House would think differently from what it did at that moment. It would recognise that to tax foreign manufactured goods for the purpose of revenue was advisable. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."] Well, that was a free trade tax. [Renewed cries of "Oh."] Hon. Members must not fly away from the principles of free trade. To tax manufactured goods for the purpose of revenue, and revenue alone, was pure free trade. It was the Cobdenite free trade, the John Stuart Mill free trade. It was the foundation upon which hon. Members had built up their present system. Prophecy of course was cheap and inexpensive, and was not well paid by results, but he ventured to predict that hon. Members opposite would yet before they had left that Parliament consider the question whether it might not be possible to get a very considerable amount of revenue from other articles than tea, sugar, tobacco, and such things. He would not object to their getting it from land values if they could prove that it was wise and expedient to do so. But if they got it from land they must still go to other sources of revenue and those were to be found in the reasonable taxation of foreign manufactured goods.

* MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.) desired to add his congratulations to those which the right hon. Gentleman had already received upon the lucid and luminous manner in which he had unfolded his proposals to the Committee. They on the Ministerial side recognised that it would be unfair to criticise those proposals since they were based upon expenditure which was not that of a Liberal Government, and were hampered and harassed by Estimates relating to armaments, which Estimates were those of an Administration now happily no longer in power.

They felt that to apply drastic criticism to the details of the present Budget would not be fair to the distinguished holder of the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. When armaments had been reduced as they were promised that they should be reduced, then and not before it would be their duty to criticise freely the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. With the exordium of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to debt he thought everybody on the Ministerial side of the House would agree, though perhaps there might be some traces of disappointment that after that lengthy exordium he did not urge a greater appropriation of the surplus towards the sinking fund. His own view was that the annual proportion of £28,000,000 might well be raised to £29,000,000 or even £30,000,000 with a view to the reduction of the enormous burdens which now pressed upon the industries and activities of the nation. He would point out that our National Debt, which now amounted to nearly £800,000,000, was in many respects to be distinguished from the National Debts of the majority, if not all, of the great countries of the world in this respect, that there were no solid assets to place against that debt. It was absolutely in the truest sense of the word a National Debt, against which we had to place perhaps only the £28,000,000 of the Suez Canal shares, a small matter of Crown lands, and a small matter perhaps of public roads. That debt was an absolute burden upon the people, to sustain the interest upon which was a great burden not only upon the masters and employers, but also upon the wage earners of the country. He thought everybody would agree with the criticisms which the Chancellor of the Exchequer very properly applied to the Local Taxation Account. The Local Taxation

Account was an account at the Bank of England which was fed in the most unbusiness like way, (1) from the Excise Licence Duty; (2) part of the Estates Duties, equal to 80 per cent. of half of the proceeds of the old Probate Duty; (3) the taxes on beer and spirits, and (4) the sums allotted in the Agricultural Rates Act. This system left it uncertain in the minds of those who ruled our local finance what sums they would have to deal with in any one year. The death of a millionaire or two might provide them with a large sum, whereas in the succeeding year they might find their funds depleted. He was sure that that was not a kind of finance which would commend itself to the Committee, and that they would all join with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in condemning it root and branch. Coming to the main consideration which underlay British finance, the question of ability in regard to the raising of the taxes of the country, and the classes upon which those taxes should be levied, the records which had been collected by the Inland Revenue authorities threw a flood of light upon the question of ability, which was always a recognised principle of British finance. Let them take, for instance, the investigations which had been made in the collection of the income-tax and of the estate duties. It was somewhat difficult to decide upon the question of how many people paid income-tax in this country, but if they could arrive at that figure they would have a light thrown upon the incidence of taxation, and guidance would be given them as to how they should frame their Budgets. There was the Inhabited House Duty which was applied only to those people who inhabited houses valued at £20 per annum and upwards. It seemed strange that in a rich and wealthy country like this, containing 9,000,000 houses, there were only 1,300,000 of the annual value of £20 and upwards. That seemed to suggest that the number of income-tax payers could not be much more than 1,000,000, and indeed closer investigation showed that to be the case. They had a most valuable record in that connection in the claims for abatement. In cases where the incomes were between £160 and £700 the income-tax payers were allowed certain abatements of their incomes before they paid income-tax. The number of persons who claimed abatements on the income-tax was shown by the latest Return to be less For the most part people with over 700,000. Even if they assumed that a certain number of people escaped taxation and that a certain number of other people did not take the trouble to claim abatement, they arrived at the conclusion that about 750,000 persons claimed abatement or were entitled to it. For the most part, people with more than £700 a year lived in houses of a high rental. In London he had calculated that a man with £700 a year and upwards would be likely to live in a house at a rental of not less than £60, and in the country he would place it at £50 a year. Taking those two criteria, in the whole of the United Kingdom the number of people with £700 a year and upwards would not be much more than 250,000. In that way they arrived at 1,000,000 income-tax payers, which was what was suggested by the total number of houses at £20 a year and upwards. What a valuable light that threw upon the distribution of incomes and the application of Adam Smith's doctrine of ability to pay, which had been expanded into the doctrine of equality of sacrifice. If there were 1,000,000 income-tax payers, and they represented 5,000,000 people, then it meant that out of 43,000,000, 5,000,000 took the whole of that income which was shown in the income-tax records. This sum amounted in the last year of which they had any record to nearly £900,000,000 sterling. When they had made deduction for repairs to houses, improper abatements, and other allowances, the solid fact remained that an amount of income between £800,000,000 and £900,000,000, or for 1904 about

£830,000,000, was enjoyed by a number of people in this country who only amounted to 5,000,000 out of 43,000,000. What a tremendous fact that was, for it meant that one-ninth of the population enjoyed half of the income of the country. But even that was overshadowed by a still greater fact which he would venture to place before the Committee. He had stated already that the possessors of incomes of between £3 per week and £700 per annum were about 750,000, but if they took the 48th report of the Inland Revenue Commissioners they would find that the incomes which they enjoyed could not possibly amount to more than £250,000,000. If that was the case it meant that an income of nearly £600,000,000 sterling, or more than one-third of the entire income of the whole of the people, was enjoyed by 1,250,000 out of 43,000,000. That was an overwhelming fact in relation to taxation, for it meant that one-third of the entire income was taken by one-thirtieth of the people. The possibility of error was so small that he thought it might be taken that the calculation was sufficiently correct to be at any rate the basis which ought to be taken into consideration in regard to any system of taxation imposed in this country. He submitted that these facts were an argument for a graduated income-tax. They also showed that the middle classes were overweighted by taxation, while the upper classes, the rich people who really controlled the activities of the country, because they controlled its land and its capital, were undertaxed. Corroboration was to be found in the death duty returns. Every year about 700,000 persons died in this country, and the amount of property they left amounted to nearly £300,000,000. Out of these 700,000 persons 27,000 left £267,000,000—that was to say, 4 per cent. of the persons who died left nearly the whole of the property which passed at death in any average year. The figures he had given were not for any one particular year, but were the average for the last five years. In each of the last six years less than 4,000 persons had left an average of £195,000,000 per annum. These figures pointed to another means by which they might apply the doctrine of equality of sacrifice. It was agreed by Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, and other economists of standing that when property passed at death that was a good time for the State to take its toll. What had been the Budget history of the last fifteen years during which period hon. Gentlemen opposite had been in power? It had been a tinkering with taxes; this year something off tea and something on tobacco, the next year something off tobacco and on tea, and so on, year after year until one was inclined to ask whether the ability of British Chancellors of the Exchequer was exhausted when they were obliged to resort to such minor subterfuges. He looked to the time when the Budget would contain more non-tax revenue than at present. We derived more than £4,500,000 of non-tax revenue from the Post Office, which pointed the way to happier methods. He would remind the Committee of what was done by other countries in this very matter. An hon. Member opposite had referred to the question of the nationalisation of the railways, and an hon. Member on the Ministerial side had in reply thrown doubt on the practicability of the proposal. When Prince Bismarck proposed to nationalise the railways of Prussia the same arguments were applied, but he nationalised them, In 1905 the income of the Prussian railways amounted to £79,000,000 and the expenditure to less than £55,000,000, with the result that there was a net profit of nearly £25,000,000. [AN HON. MEMBER: What did they cost?] They cost a sum which was largely represented in the national debt of Prussia. The profits of the national Prussian railways were not only sufficient to pay the interest on the whole of the national debt, but to pay £10,000,000 per annum for other matters. The State mines of Prussia yielded a profit of £1,200,000 a year, and the forests and domains a profit £4,000,000. In Japan the non-tax revenue was one-half of the total revenue, and would soon be two-thirds. Japan, like ourselves, had passed through a great war, but because of her national assets and revenue producing administrations the burden of taxation in Japan would diminish as time went on, while ours steadily increased. These things, he urged, must have consideration in the Budgets of the future. It was time to think of the development of the country in all its resources and to the devotion of national wealth to truly national ends.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry) said the exhaustive speech of the hon. Member for North Paddington conclusively proved, if it proved anything at all, that the country was now suffering from the fact that the rich had been getting richer and the poor poorer for some considerable time. That result had been arrived at by the blessed system of free imports which he understood the hon. Gentleman somewhat strongly to support. In regard to the coal tax he was not an expert; but he was glad to note that the Government had practically repudiated the doctrine that a tax upon a commodity must necessarily fall upon the consumer. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] Well, if it did not fall upon the consumer he could not see the logic of the argument of hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial Benches. The argument advanced in favour of the repeal of the coal tax was that it was the producer who paid the duty. [AN HON MEMBER: That is an export duty, not an import duty.] This was a matter of principle, and two different things could not be said in regard to the same principle. What he had risen, however, to draw attention to was the very poor treatment which agriculture had received at the hands of the Government. In the Gracious Speech from the Throne they were told that earnest inquiries were being made into the social and economic conditions of the people of Great Britain, and that measures were to be submitted to the House by which a larger number of people would be retained on and attracted to the soil. These measures, however, had not yet been brought before the House. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in the course of his speech had said that he intended to go very thoroughly into the question of State subventions towards local purposes. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would at the same time consider the incidence of local and Imperial taxation on the various industries of the country, including agriculture. At present, rural, and paid far more than its proper share in rates and taxes. He felt quite certain that a great deal could be done towards lightening in a fair and just manner the taxation on farmers and occupiers of small holdings, on whom the existing rates fell very heavily compared with people who were not on the land. He hoped that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer took this subject into his serious consideration he would realise that the proper way to bring the people back to the land was to make it easier and more profitable for them to live upon the land.

*MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said if it was not presumptious on his part he would express his appreciation of the remarkable way in which the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer had handled a very abstruse and complicated array of figures. It was all very well to hear homilies on retrenchment, but it was one thing to preach such homilies, and another thing to practise them. He believed that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer came to deal with the various departments he would perhaps find his prophecies of retrenchment a little difficult of fulfilment. There was the President of the Board of Education, and the right hon. Gentleman would have to come into conflict with him if a question arose concerning education. Then he would have the Postmaster-General to deal with. It was well known that a conflict was going on between the Post Office and the National Telephone Company, which must inevitably entail the expenditure of a large amount of public money; that was a question upon which retrenchment was quite impossible and impracticable. He should have liked to say something as to the advisability of reducing the taxation on sugar, but he recognised that any remarks that he might make upon that subject might be regarded with a certain amount of suspicion by hon. Members on the Ministerial side. Therefore, he would not presume to urge upon the right hon. Gentleman his regret that he had not been able to do something to relieve the country from the sugar tax; he would only say that not only as a food was sugar worthy of some amount of consideration; it was even more worthy of attention as the raw material for certain industries from which they heard complaints at the present moment. The right hon. Gentleman had said that sugar was taxed within 30 per cent. of its value, but that was the retail selling value. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that tea was taxed within 90 per cent. of its value, but that was the wholesale selling value, not the retail selling value. That was quite, if he might use the expression, another pair of shoes, and if the anti-tea duty agitation had done nothing else it had directed the attention of the people of this country to the enormous profits made by the middlemen who had dealings in tea. He had always held strong views against the coal tax, and therefore he was exceedingly glad that the right hon. Gentleman had seen his way to abolish it, but there was a point in regard to it upon which he wanted a certain amount of illumination The question had reference to the incidence of the tax and upon the logical methods by which the right hon. Gentleman had arrived at the conclusion that it ought to be abolished. He thought they might start with the proposition — he was sure this statement would commend itself to hon. Gentlemen who were followers of Mr. Cobden—that every tax had an inherent vice, and that all taxes were vicious because they were barriers between nations and were preventatives of free exchange between those nations. Applying that doctrine to the coal tax it was vicious, but taking the case of Hamburg, which, if he remembered rightly, was called more than once the test market, from the point of view of Great Britain in selling coal to Hamburg the tax was a disadvantage upon us, because it was a barrier raised between our market and that of Hamburg. That was the reason which underlay the removal of the tax, and he thought all hon. Members would agree that the barrier was just as much a barrier whether it was raised by the selling nation or whether it was raised by the buying nation, and that the coal tax would have been equally a barrier if, instead of being imposed by this country, it had been imposed by the free city of Hamburg. Therefore, hon. Members would have been equally pleased at its removal, and the reason was that the barrier was erected in regard to an article which could be obtained by the good people of Hamburg in any quantities they liked from other countries. There were two conditions which might justify the retention of such a barrier. The first was that the Exchequer must have money, and the other was the political difficulty. It was said that coal was an article of great national value, and in the interests of the nation ought not to be alienated. That was an argument which he confessed could only apply to one class of coal, and that was the finest steam coal, and with regard to that he could not see why the tax should not be retained, because finest steam coal was an article which would command its price and sell in any market in the world. It was a monopoly, and therefore was an article in regard to which the tax always feel upon the consumer and not upon the producer. He agreed, however, that the coal tax was to be regarded as a barrier between this country and—for instance—Hamburg, and that it was desirable for this country to remove it; it was a barrier because it applied to an article of universal consumption and produced by other countries. But let them look at the question from the point of view of Hamburg. It did not matter to Hamburg whether the tax was imposed by this country or by themselves. *Ex hypothesi* they did not pay the tax, because if our market was closed they could draw their supply from another market. Then they went one step farther, and here it was that he wanted illumination from the right hon. Gentleman. Let them suppose instead of Hamburg they read Great Britain, and instead of a tax on British coal, a tax on foreign wheat, an article capable of being produced by untaxed countries in unlimited quantities, large enough to supply the requirements of this country, they had substantially the same tax in the main, only in this case it was imposed by the buying countries instead of by the selling countries. Would hon. Gentlemen say that the tax had in one case an incidence on the one side, and in the other an incidence on the other side? They could not have it both ways. More than once in the course of the session they had had indications that hon. Gentlemen opposite were beginning to see light, and to appreciate the fact that it was highly desirable that wherever possible British work should be conserved for British workmen. He could only hope that, in the days to come, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would fulfil this theory, of which he had laid down the foundation that night, and come over and help tariff reformers.

MR. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Stafford, Handsworth) craved the indulgence of the Committee in making his maiden speech. He held that he had a greater right to that indulgence than the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, inasmuch as he claimed to be a real maiden. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had asked indulgence in making his maiden Budget, but he regarded the right hon. Gentleman more in the light of a widow, as he only came before the House in a new capacity. He congratulated the Chancellor of the

Exchequer on the excellent speech he had made in introducing what the right hon. Gentleman would excuse him for calling a thoroughly bad Budget. When the right hon. Gentleman spoke he thought he had never heard him speak so well, and when he heard the right hon. Gentleman propose to pay off the National Debt in a comparatively brief space of time he quite expected to hear a speech on the subject of fiscal reform, which would provide the funds to enable us to pay off the Debt while encouraging our native industries. The right hon. Gentleman did not, however, fulfil his early promise. The only result of this magnificent beginning was a proposal to take off the coal duty. "What a falling off was there." He believed the right hon. Gentleman was honest in his wish and his attempt to reduce the National Debt by a large sum, and he had gathered from the right hon. Gentleman's remarks that they were going to get rid of it altogether in the next four or five years. The Committee could imagine his disappointment when he heard they were only going to have a reduction out of the surplus of £500,000. What he wanted to know was this. If the consumer paid the 1s. duty, why did we not have an export duty on coal? If the consumer did not pay the duty, why not have a tax on imported corn? In either of these ways we could realise the right hon. Gentleman's beautiful dream of paying off the National Debt.

Mr. ASQUITH heartily congratulated the hon. Member upon having discharged the difficult task of delivering a maiden speech with admirable discretion and much point and humour. The hon. Member had said that he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was not a real maiden. If he might use the French tongue he would say he was afraid he was a *demi-vierge.* He certainly had not got that sanguine enthusiasm which the hon. Member had displayed, in the full tide and fervour of which he attributed to him the intention of paying off the National debt in three or four years. That was an intention which he was sure he had never expressed. He did not however rise for the purpose of making a controversial speech. His object in rising was merely to ask the Committee to proceed to pass the formal Resolutions necessary to the financial business of the country, with the assurance that upon the tea duty Resolution there should be a general discussion to-morrow on the general policy of the Budget.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR offered no resistance to the right hon. Gentleman's proposal. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman had met their wish. Under those circumstances he would not oppose the Resolutions of which the right hon. Gentleman had spoken. Of course, no other business would be taken to-night.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W. R. Pudsey): That is understood.

Question put, and agreed to.

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

Resolved, That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections two, three, four, and five of The Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by Section five of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and seven.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

CONTINUATION OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTIES ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

Resolved, That the additional Excise duties on beer and spirits imposed by

Sections six and seven of The Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and seven.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

PERMANENT ANNUAL CHARGE.

Resolved, That the permanent annual charge for the National Debt for the current financial year be twenty-eight and a-half instead of twenty-eight million pounds.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

CHINA INDEMNITY.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the application in like manner as the new sinking fund is applied of any sums paid into the Exchequer on account of the China Indemnity.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

INCOME-TAX.

Resolved, That Income-tax shall be charged, for the year beginning the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred and six, at the rate of one shilling in the pound.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

Resolved, That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the National Debt, Customs, and Inland Revenue.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

ALLOTMENTS (LONDON) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Lord WILLOUGHBY de ERESBY objected to the Bill's being proceeded with without its object being explained. The Opposition could not be expected to allow a Bill of this description to pass when they had received absolutely no explanation and no information in regard to its provisions.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport) said that the Bill was merely to extend to London the provisions of the Allotments Act in order that the London County Council might have power to let small pieces of land on the outskirts of London for the convenience of working men desiring such plots. There was nothing new or revolutionary in the measure, and he hoped hon. Gentlemen opposite would allow it to pass. It was not a compulsory measure.

***Colonel LEGGE** said it was very undesirable that a Bill of this character should be brought in in this way, and the House asked to pass it without any explanation whatever. It was all very well for the hon. Member for Devonport to say it was simply a Bill to apply to the County of London. He thought that even the London Members would like to know something about it before they assented to the Second Reading. He did not wish to speak disrespectfully of the London County Council, for he had been a member of it himself, and he had great admiration for the work the Council had done, but they had quite enough work to do at the present time, and it was very desirable that their duties should not be increased.

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday.

Adjourned at eight minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 1st *May*, 1906.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.

The Lord Privy Seal (*M. Ripon*) acquainted the House that His Majesty had (by Commission) appointed the Earl of Onslow Speaker of the House in the absence of the Lord Chancellor. The said Commission was read.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.

The Lord Privy Seal (*M. Ripon*) acquainted the House that His Majesty had (by Commission) appointed the Lord Loreburn Speaker of the House; in the absence of the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Onslow, the Earl of Halsbury, the Earl Waldegrave, the Lord Ribblesdale, and the Lord Balfour of Burleigh. The said Commission was read.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Lord Tredegar's Supplemental Estate—Petition for a Private Bill; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to two English judges.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1.) [H.L.]; Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Kestevon, etc.) [H.L.]. Watford Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Clacton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Shrewsbury Corporation Water Bill, Ritz Hotel, Limited—(Petition for Bill), Crellin's Patents—(Petition for Bill), Poole Corporation Water Bill, Sutton District Water Bill. Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next.

Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]. Petition for additional provision; of the Scottish Union and National Insurance Company under their Common Seal together with the proposed amendments annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 12th of March and the 3rd of April last discharged, and the Bill committed.

Crediton Lighting and Power Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: the orders made on the 12th of March and the 3rd of April last discharged, and the Bill committed.

Scottish Provident Institution Buildings Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}.

Midland Railway Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Kidderminster Gas Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with amendments; the said amendments considered and agreed to.

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899. Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lord be proposed to the House as a member of the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz.: Duke of Argyll, agreed to; and the said Lord appointed accordingly.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Devon, etc.) Bill [H.L.]. A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts 1870 to 1903,

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

to enable the councils of the administrative counties of Devon and the West Riding of Yorkshire to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. Was presented by the Lord President (*Earl Crewe*); Read 1^a; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 61.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TURKEY, No. 2 (1906.)

Further paper respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe (in continuation of Turkey, No. 1. (1906).

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3567. France (Calais).

No. 3568. Portugal (Beira).

No. 3569. Turkey (Beirut and the Coast of Syria).

No. 3570. Denmark (Iceland).

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION BOARD (IRELAND.)

Annual Report for the year 1905.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade up to the 31st December 1905, and of the proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) PENSION FUND.

Account of receipts and payments in respect of the capital and income of the above fund, for the year ended 31st December 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the table.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.L.].

NOW

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (BUILDING BYE-LAWS) BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments. The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next and Bill to be printed as amended. (N° 60.)

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

Order of the day for the Second Reading, read, and discharged.

THE THIBETAN AGREEMENT.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I beg to ask the noble Lord the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether the Chinese Government have given their adhesion to the Thibetan Agreement of September 7th, 1904, and, if so, whether he is able to inform your Lordships as to the terms upon which that adhesion has been given.

***The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE)**: My Lords, in reply to the question which has just been put to me, I am glad to be able to inform your Lordships that the negotiations which have been for some time proceeding, partly at Calcutta and partly at Pekin, in regard to the adhesion of China to the Convention between this country and Thibet have proved successful. The convention between Great Britain and China was signed at Pekin on April 27th, and it secures the adhesion of China to the Convention established with Thibet in 1904. The text of the Convention has not yet been received, but it will be laid before Parliament in due course. The Convention, however, does not alter the arrangements arrived at under the Convention of Thibet as confirmed by the Government of India. It contains an engagement on our part not to encroach on Thibetan territory nor to interfere in the government of Thibet, the Government of China undertaking on their part not to allow any foreign State to interfere in the government or internal administration of Thibet. It also states that we do not seek for ourselves any of the concessions mentioned in Article 9 of the Convention of Thibet which were denied by that Article to any other State or to the subjects of any other State. The convention with China does not alter the amount of the Thibetan indemnity in any way.

MACEDONIA.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, I wish to ask my noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question, of which I have given him private notice, with regard to the situation in Macedonia. Your Lordships will recollect that just before Easter the noble Lord the Under-Secretary stated that the Sultan had not yet sanctioned the Iradé for the Macedonian Budgets. The Question I wish to ask is whether the Iradé has since been issued.

***LORD FITZMAURICE**: My Lords, I am glad to be able to inform my noble friend that the Iradé has been issued. The authorities in Salonica received information on the 1st of April that it had been issued. I believe the exact date of its issue was the previous day.

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD DENMAN: My Lords, I desire to say only a few words in explanation of the necessity for introducing this Bill during the present session. In consequence of the failure during the autumn of 1904 of the potato crop in certain parts of Ireland, the late Government authorised the Local Government Board to put into operation, with the aid of Board of Works loans, a scheme for the supply of seed potatoes similar to those adopted in former years. This, I believe, is really the business of the Department of Agriculture in Ireland, but at the particular time this scheme was put into operation it was not equal to the task of distributing these seed potatoes. The duty, therefore, devolved upon the boards of guardians. In all, some 14,000 tons of seed potatoes were distributed, and the total amount of the loans issued was over £70,000. Last session a Bill was introduced by the late Government authorising these loans and the taking of the proceedings necessary for the working of the scheme, but the Bill was withdrawn at the end of the session. This Bill is brought in to validate the loans made by the Board of Works and the proceedings then taken. In short, it is really a measure to legalise the action of the late Government. In the short debate which took place on the Bill in the House of Commons, Mr. Walter Long, the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, expressed his approval in marked terms, and he earnestly hoped that the measure would receive the support of all sections in the House. The necessity for the pressing of the Bill is urgent, as county councils in Ireland are about to strike their poor rate for the ensuing year. I may mention that in future all schemes of this kind will be taken in hand by the Department of Agriculture and will not be thrown on boards of guardians.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Denman.*)

LORD ASHBOURNE: The noble Lord has very clearly and fairly stated the provisions of this Bill and the necessity for its passing. From time to time such measures have been needed in Ireland, and they have generally passed on a fair statement of the necessity for them. I can see no objection to your Lordships according the Bill a Second Reading, though it is quite possible that one or two Amendments will have to be considered in Committee.

On Question, Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

INSURANCE COMPANIES' FUNDS.

THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, I beg to move, on behalf of the Board of Trade, that the Motion standing in my name be agreed to.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire and report what steps should be taken, by deposit of funds or otherwise, to provide adequate security for British policy holders in Life Insurance Companies which have their chief office outside the United Kingdom, but which carry on business in this country." —(*The Earl of Granard.*)

LORD ASHBOURNE: I suppose the terms of the reference have been very fully and closely considered. It is most desirable that such an inquiry should take place, and recent events have rendered the necessity for inquiry more apparent; but on reading the Motion I was disposed to think the terms of reference somewhat narrow. They certainly might have been made wider with advantage, but I presume the Board of Trade are of opinion that the object aimed at will be attained under this reference.

The Earl of GRANARD: I can assure my noble and learned friend that the terms of the reference were very carefully considered by the President of the Board of Trade and other members of the Government before the Motion was placed on the Paper.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Moved, "That the Lords following be named of the Committee; L. Balfour, L. Stanley of Alderley, L. St. Oswald L. Grimthorpe, L. Burghclere."—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

The Committee to meet on Monday next, at half-past Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

EGYPTIAN BOUNDARY DISPUTE.

Lord MONKSWELL: My Lords, in the absence of my noble friend Lord Reay I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if Turkish troops have removed the boundary pillars between Egyptian and Turkish territory near El Arisch, and if he can make any statement in regard to the boundary dispute between the Egyptian and Turkish Governments near Akabah and the increase of the garrison in in Egypt.

*Lord FITZMAURICE: My Lords, in reply to my noble friend I have, in the first place, to state that in 1904 the strength of the Egyptian garrison was reduced. Lord Cromer is now of opinion that, in view of the unrest which exists in Egypt and which is in some measure due to the action of the Porte in connection with the frontier, it is desirable to reinforce the garrison. I am informed by my noble friend who represents the War Office in this House that what has been arranged is this—one battalion goes to Egypt from Malta, three companies go from Crete, and one cavalry regiment and one Horse Artillery battery go from home. A battalion at Malta is also held ready to go if wanted. After the statement had appeared in the Press that Turkish troops had removed the boundary pillars set up by Ishmail Pasha about three miles from the sea shore at El Rafeh and thirty miles to the north-east of El Arisch on the Mediterranean coast, which is part of Egypt, H.M. ship "Minerva" was ordered to proceed to El Arisch to ascertain what had happened and to bring back a report, but that report has not yet been received. Our Ambassador at Constantinople, however, has now been informed by the Grand Vizier that a Commission will be despatched to make inquiries, and, if the pillar is found to been have disturbed, to repair and replace it. Tabah, which is five miles by sea and about nine miles by land from Akabah, following the coast line, and one or two other posts in the Sinai Peninsula,. have also been recently occupied by Turkish troops. It is considered that these posts are within the territory which is within the limits of Egyptian administration. The Turkish title to Akabah itself has never been in dispute. I wish rather to insist on that point, because incorrect statements in regard to that matter have been made. The Sinai Peninsula itself has remained in the effective and undisputed possession of the Khedive, though not forming a portion of Egypt proper, from a date many years previous to the accession of Ishmail Pasha. The demands put forward by the Turkish Government have, however, extended far beyond Tabah and its neighbourhood, and have now rendered it necessary that there should be a joint delimitation of the whole frontier on that side, and that, pending a general settlement, the Turkish forces should retire from Tabah. This is what His Majesty's Government have asked from the beginning, but what the Porte has hitherto declined. The Porte is now again being urged to agree to it. As the negotiations are continuing, it would not be desirable at present that I should go beyond the statement which I have just made. I may, however, just add this further observation on the point which I mentioned at the commencement of my statement, that El Rafeh is considered to be within Egypt proper, while, as I have explained, the Sinai Peninsula, though not in Egypt proper, has remained under undisputed Egyptian administration.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 1*st May*, 1906.

The House met at 2.45 p.m.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

Mr. NUSSEY reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolution reported from the Select Committee, "That, in the case of the Sutton District Water, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolution agreed to.

London County Buildings Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Company to acquire lands for road widenings; to abandon a portion of their authorised tramways; and to construct other works in lieu thereof; to extend the period limited for construction of works and land purchases; to authorise the Corporation of Wigan to purchase portions of tramways; and for other purposes." [Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time for purchasing lands; and for the construction and completion of certain tramways, street widenings, and works authorised by the South Lancashire Tramways Acts 1900, 1901, and 1903; and for other purposes." [South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Sheffield District Railway Company to enter into and carry into effect working and other agreements; and for other purposes." [Sheffield District Railway Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to effect a fusion of the life assurance and annuity business of the National Assurance Company of Ireland with the undertaking of the Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company; and for other purposes." [National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [Lords.]

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Sheffield District Railway Bill [Lords]; National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION.

Petition from Fareham, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES TAXATION, ETC., (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Carlton Main; Church Lane; Frystone; Glasshoughton; Leeds Central (B); Lochgelly; Monk Bretton; New Oaks; Pontefract; Radstock; South Heindley; and Wythemoor Pits Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

DOGS BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law: From Alburgh; Aldeburgh on Sea (two); Alton (four); Alverstoke (two); Badwell Ash (two); Bailbrook; Barnsley; Barnstaple and Sherwell; Barton; Bentley; Bentworth (two); Bexhill (two); Bigby (two); Bodiam; Bradford; Brancaster (two); Brierfield; Broadwater Down (two); Broughton; Buckland Dinham; Buckland St. Mary; Buriton; Burmarsh (two); Caundle Purse (two); Charlynch; Cheetham (three); Cheetham Hill; Chilton Moor; Clevedon; Closworth; Combe Down; Creech St. Michael (two); Crookham (two); Crowborough; Dalton le Dale; Denham (two); Eastham; East Malling (two); Easton in Gordano; East Winch (two); Eastwood; Eppleton; Evershot; Ferry Fryston; Foleshill; Frome (three); Frome Selwood; Froxfield; Froyle; Gayton le Marsh; Godmanchester; Greatham; Great Tew; Haverfordwest (three); Hepworth; Herrington; Hersham (two); Holborn; Holcombe; Huddersfield (two); Llanrhian (two); London (three); Lumley; Marnham (two); Morley St. Botolph; New Basford; Nutley; Old Alresford; Paddington (four); Peasemore; Penshaw (two); Playden (two); Ripponden; Rishworth; Rotherfield; Roxby cum Risby; Ryhope (two); Salford (three); Shedfield (two); Silksworth; Southwark (three); Spaxton; Spitalfields; St. Athan (two); St. Marylebone; Stockport; Stoke Ash; Tenby; Thorn Faulcon (two); Toppesfield; Trent (two); Tunbridge Wells (two); Vaynor (two); Warblington; Waterloo Ashton; Westend; West Hatch; West Malling (two); Weston Bath; Whitechapel; Whitestaunton; Wingfield; Winnick; Winterton; Wolborough; and, Yaxley (two); to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS ACT (1893) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE (UNITED KINGDOM, COLONIES, AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Return [presented 27th April] to be printed. [No. 148.]

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND PENSION FUND.

Annual Accounts presented, of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st December, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of Judicial Statistics for England and Wales, 1904. Part II. (Civil Judical Statistics), edited by Sir John Macdonnell, C.B., LL.D., Master of the Supreme Court [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 30th April; *Mr. Lloyd-George*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 149.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3567 to 3570 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TURKEY (NO. 2, 1906).

Copy presented, of further Paper respecting the affairs of South Eastern

Europe (in continuation of Turkey (No. 1, 1906) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CASUALTIES TO SHIPS ON THE NAVY LIST.

Return ordered, "of Casualties to Ships on the Navy List, viz., (1) Casualties to Ships; (2) Casualties to engines, during the year ending the 31st day of December, 1905, showing the date, the name and class of the ship damaged, the nature of the accident, time under repair, and the result of any inquiry that may have been held into the circumstances, specifying if a court-martial was held (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 338, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Bellairs.*)

LOCAL OPTION (COLONIES).

Address "for Return of the provisions in Colonial Laws by which powers of Local Option in regard to the issue or renewal of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors are conferred upon the inhabitants of British Colonies, showing (1) the licensing authority; (2) the licensing area; (3) the different Options submitted to a popular vote, with the proportion of votes required to carry each Option; (4) the persons entitled to vote; (5) the periods at which elections are held."—(*Mr. Leif Jones.*)

GAS UNDERTAKINGS.

Return ordered, "relating to all authorised Gas Undertakings in the United Kingdom, other than those of Local Authorities, for the year ended the 31st day of December, 1905 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 320, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

GAS UNDERTAKINGS (LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Return ordered, "relating to all authorised Gas Undertakings in the United Kingdom belonging to Local Authorities for the year ended the 25th day of March, 1906 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 321, of Session 1905)."—*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Estate Duty and Probate Register.

MR. SEARS (Cheltenham): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he is aware that in twenty-three towns in England where Probate Registers exist, at an annual cost in salaries of about £14,000, there are also located in the same towns offices of collector of Inland Revenue; will he state the necessity for this duplication when collectors of Inland Revenue are authorised to deal with the same taxes; will he also state what arrangements are made and what staff is charged with the duty of preventing evasions of estate and other similar duties in the country districts as well as in towns.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The collection of duty on probate of wills is only one incident in the process of probate and is always performed by officers of Inland Revenue who, however, could not conveniently be charged with the whole business of probate, including custody of wills. There is no staff charged specially with the duty of preventing evasion of death duties, against which the principal protection lies in the conditions which the law imposes on interference with the property of deceased persons, and the opportunities thus afforded of access to the particulars of such property.

Medical Officer for Downpatrick Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General if arrangements will be made, and when, for the appointment of an official medical officer in connection with the Downpatrick post office.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Up to the present a suitable candidate for the post in question has not been forthcoming.

Railway Construction in West Africa.

SIR C. HILL (Shrewsbury): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will grant a Return showing the railways constructed or in course of construction by the Crown Agents on the West Coast of Africa since 1900 inclusive, their mileage, the original estimate of their cost, and the actual cost of construction per mile so far as known.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The hon. Member appears to be under some misapprehension. The Crown Agents for the Colonies do not construct railways. The manner in which the Government railways in West Africa have been constructed is explained in the Paper relating to the construction of railways in Sierra Leone, Lagos, and the Gold Coast [Cd. 2325], which was presented to Parliament in December, 1904, and in which will be found also the particulars for which the hon. Member asks.

Superannuation for Temporary Civil Assistants of the Ordnance Survey.

MR. BRODIE (Surrey, Reigate): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is in a position to make any statement in regard to the claims of the temporary civil assistants of the Ordnance Survey to the rights of superannuation.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I regret that it has not been found possible to arrive at a decision on this matter at present. It is still under my consideration.

Private Members' Bills.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state the number of Bills brought in during the last ten years by private Members, and the estimated expenditure in printing them; and how many have passed into law.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*)

	Estimated Expenditure.
	£
In 1896, 178 Bills were introduced by private Members 16 became law	660
In 1897, 192 were introduced 15 became law	708
In 1898, 184 were introduced 18 became law	769
In 1899, 164 were introduced 16 became law	673
In 1900, 162 were introduced 15 became law	826
In 1901, 153 were introduced 4 became law	565
In 1902, 168 were introduced 15 became law	678
In 1903, 166 were introduced 12 became law	759
In 1904, 146 were introduced 11 passed into law	683
In 1905, 167 were introduced 6 became law	754

In all 1,680 Bills were introduced by private Members, of which 128 passed into law, at a total cost of £7,075.

Overtime Pay of Assistant Clerks.

MR. S. COLLINGS (Lambeth, Kennington): To ask the Secretary of the

Treasury if he will state on what grounds he declines to grant to assistant clerks (new class) a rate of overtime pay equivalent to one and a quarter times the rate awarded for their ordinary work, and thus applying to that body of civil servants the rate laid down by the Tweedmouth Commission of 1896 with respect to postal servants and acted upon by the Government.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The "time and a quarter" rate, in force for certain classes of Post Office employees, has never been applied to the clerical staff in public departments; the conditions of employment in which are not comparable with those in the Post Office.

German Lottery Circulars.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received copies of circulars which have been posted through the United Kingdom in connection with a German money lottery; and if he will explain why special facilities are given by the postal department for their delivery.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have received copies of circulars relating to the German money lottery referred to, and I have drawn the attention of the police to the matter. The hon. Member is under a misapprehension in supposing that special facilities are given by the Post Office for the delivery of lottery circulars. On the contrary, when they are sent in open covers and so can be detected, they are withheld from delivery.

Report of Motor Cars Commission.

MR. PIKE PEASE: To ask the President of the Local Government Board when the Commission on motor cars will issue its Report.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I understand that the preparation of the Report is in course of progress, but I am unable to say when it will be issued.

Reorganisation of General Register and Record Office of Shipping Seamen.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any decision has yet been arrived at with regard to the reorganisation of the General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen; and, if not, whether he will appoint a small Committee constituted of Members of this House to inquire into the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) No, Sir. I am not prepared to propose the appointment of a Committee of Members of this House to inquire into the comparatively small questions that have arisen in the branch of the Board of Trade to which the hon. Member refers. These questions are receiving the attention of the Treasury and the Board of Trade, and I think for the present (at any rate) that that is quite sufficient.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, seeing that the limits of the Port of London, as defined by Treasury Order of August 1st, 1883, are from Teddington Lock to the entrance of Havergore Creek in Essex, and that the situation of the General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen at Westminister is within those limits, he will now take steps to retain the office at its present address.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Since the office of the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen has been removed temporarily from the City to Westminster, many complaints have reached the Board of Trade, and definite pledges have been given that other offices more suitable for seafarers would be provided. That decision will be adhered to, and I hope that an office on Tower Hill will soon be available. The Treasury Order to which the hon. Member refers was made under the Customs Consolidation Act, and applies to Customs matters.

Recruiting of British Seamen for Foreign Ships.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that for the past two weeks the sailors and firemen at the ports of Hamburg and Bremen, in Germany, have been on strike to obtain an advance of wages; whether he is aware that German shipping agents have employed unlicensed persons in England to supply and engage seamen; whether the Board of Trade will take steps to prevent such unlicensed persons from engaging and supplying seamen, as provided for by Sections 110 and 111 and following sub-sections of the Merchant Shipping Act; and whether he is aware that it has already been decided in the English Courts of Law that it is an offence under the Merchant Shipping Act to engage and supply seamen for foreign ships in ports of the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am aware of the strike to which the hon. Member refers, and I am making inquiries as to the circumstances under which seamen are being engaged in this country to take the place of strikers on some German ships. Perhaps the hon. Member will send me particulars of any cases of illegality that come to his notice. I am also aware of the legal decision to which reference is made in the Question, and shall not hesitate to take any steps that may be found necessary in order to enforce the law.

Religious Instruction in Schools.

MR. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether in the time tables now in force in any, and, if so, how many, non-provided schools more than two-fifths of the time allotted to religious instruction is devoted to the teaching of the doctrines peculiar to any religious denomination.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I have no information on the subject.

Belfast Postal Staff.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether it is the intention of the Department to reduce the established female telegraph staff at Belfast by three appointments; whether he is aware that there are at that office five female learners and one substitute, who have been waiting for appointments from two and a half to three and a half years; and whether he will give instructions that the lapsing of any appointments that may become vacant shall be deferred until those now waiting have been placed on the established staff.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will have inquiry made with regard to the staff at Belfast, and I will let the hon. Member know the result as soon as possible. I cannot, of course, create appointments not warranted by the work in order to provide places for learners, however much I may regret that in certain circumstances their promotion is very slow.

Education Grants to Schools in Highland Crofting Districts.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary for Scotland, having regard to the payments in aid of the provision of a properly qualified teaching staff under Section II., Sub section D, of the Education (Scotland) Minute of March 19th, 1906, will he state what sum would be allocated to schools in each of the crofting counties, taking as a basis the average number of school children on the roll during the school financial year ending between February 28th, 1905, and January 31st, 1906.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The sum which would be allocated to schools in each of the crofting counties under Section II., D, of the Minute of March 19th, 1906, on the basis stated in the Question, provided that the conditions prescribed in such section were fulfilled, would be as follows:—

	£
Argyll - - - -	5,990
Caithness - - -	2,090
Inverness - - -	6,350
Orkney - - -	2,170
Ross - - - -	4,200
Shetland - - -	2,300
Sutherland - -	1,380
	£24,480

It must be understood, of course, that this is merely a possible payment, the actual amount to be paid depending upon the number of schools which are found to have fulfilled the conditions of the Minute.

Ballyshannon, Derrygonnelly, Killeter and Ballinamallard Loan Funds.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the condition of the Ballyshannon, Derrygonnelly, Killeter, and Ballinamallard Loan Funds; whether he is aware that a number of poor persons in Fermanagh have invested their savings in the debentures of these loan funds, but owing to recently discovered defects in the law money due cannot be recovered; and whether, in view of the number of the borrowers impoverished by interest and fines, and of the fact that the Irish Loan Fund Board is seriously to blame for the present state of things, it is proposed to take early action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I understand that the law, as regards loan fund societies in Ireland, requires amendment, in the interest of depositors in the societies, and my right hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General for Ireland has already announced that it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation on the subject this session, if time should permit. I do not think it can reasonably be said that the Loan Fund Board is responsible for the existing state of the law.

Disturbance at Stewartstown.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 10th March last a drumming party was stoned from behind the houses at the Hibernian Lodge, in Stewartstown; and whether, seeing that the disturbance took place in the presence of the police, to whom many of the offenders are known, he can say if any arrests have been made; and, if not, what action does he propose to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The occurrence in question took place at 10 o'clock at night. The drumming party was passing through a quarter occupied by the opposite party when some stones were thrown over the roofs of houses, apparently at the drumming party, but little harm was done. The police have no evidence against the offenders, whom they did not see. No action, therefore, is possible.

Establishment of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to make any reduction in the number of assistant inspectors general and county inspectors in the Royal Irish Constabulary; and whether it is contemplated to make any adjustment in the establishment so as to compensate the various ranks for the stoppage of promotion which reduction has entailed.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) No reduction in the number of assistant inspectors general or county inspectors is under consideration. The existing statutory law requires that there shall be a county inspector for each county. The Answer to the latter part of the Question is in the negative.

Conduct of Sunday Footballers at Stewartstown.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the disorderly conduct of footballers at Stewartstown on Sunday 1st ultimo, and on other occasions, and to their use of obscene language to persons leaving divine service; and whether, seeing that football playing during divine service on Sundays in this town has become a nuisance to the inhabitants, he can see his way to put a stop to the practice, or confine the players to a quarter where respectable persons will be protected from such treatment in future.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the police authorities that on Sunday, 1st April, a party of football players from Cookstown drove through Stewartstown, both when going to and coming from Coalisland, where a football match was played. Four policemen, who accompanied the party, have reported that their conduct was good, and that no obscene language, or language of any kind, was used by them to persons leaving divine service. The game of football is not played on Sundays within a quarter of a mile of Stewartstown, and no complaints of disorderly conduct by football players have been made to the police authorities in regard to the 1st April or any other occasion.

Irish Land Purchase—Investments.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the investments of purchase moneys, under the Irish Land Act of 1903, are confined by operation of the Land Commission rules to a small minority, not specially qualified, of the Dublin Stock Exchange, to the injury of the public and of the other members of the Dublin Stock Exchange, who find themselves precluded from transacting the business offered to them by their own clients; whether he will lay upon the Table a statement issued by the Dublin Stock Exchange on the subject detailing the above grievance and suggesting the remedy; and whether he can see his way to take some steps with a view to removing this monopoly.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Under Rule XXII. of the Rules of March, 1897, made by the Land Commission under The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, the purchase money of estates sold to the tenants under the Act of 1903 is invested, pending completion of the sales, through the stockbrokers appointed by the Lord Chancellor to carry out the investment of funds under the control of the Supreme Court. Under Rule 28 of The Public Trustee Rules, 1904, made by the Land Judge and the Land Commission, and approved by the Lord-Lieutenant, the investments of the public trustee are made through the same brokers. The qualifications of these stockbrokers are no doubt fully considered by the Lord Chancellor, who appoints them. The question whether a change in the system would be of advantage to the public is one on which there is considerable difference of opinion, though, no doubt, such a change would benefit the other members of the stock exchange. If the right hon. Member should think that any good purpose would be served by laying upon the Table the statement on the subject, which has been issued by a special committee of the Dublin Stock Exchange, I will offer no objection, if he should see fit to move for the Return. I do not propose myself to lay the paper upon the Table, as my doing so would imply that I have some responsibity in the matter. As the right hon. Gentleman is, no doubt, aware, from his official acquaintance with the matter, the question at issue lies outside my sphere of action, and I am advised that my interference is not called for, especially as my predecessor brought before the notice of the rule-making authorities the representations which had reached him.

Appointment of Assistant Irish Land Commissions.

Mr. WALTER LONG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of men who have been appointed Assistant Commissioners to the Land Commission in Ireland under the system of examination adopted in 1899; and what system has been substituted for the examination to which previous candidates were called upon to submit themselves.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The number of persons appointed Assistant Land Commissioners who had qualified under the system of examination adopted in 1899 was twenty-one. The Irish Government satisfied itself that the gentlemen recently selected possessed the statutory qualifications required for the post and had experience which would have made it quite superflous to subject them to examination. The rules do not require examination.

General Election—Attempts to Illegally Influence Votes.

Mr. BRODIE: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the number of alleged cases of dismissal of employees, and of the withdrawal of custom from tradesmen on political grounds, which occurred during, and subsequent to, the recent General Election, and which, if proved, would constitute offences under the Corrupt Practices Acts, he can see his way to instruct the Public Prosecutor to institute an informal inquiry where desired by individual Members of Parliament, with a view to prosecution in those cases which appear to justify such a course.

(*Answered by Sir John Walton.*) It is my duty as Attorney-General to give such directions as occasion may require to the Public Prosecutor with reference to the discharge of his duties. Shortly after the General Election he brought the subject under my notice, and I directed that he should entertain and thoroughly investigate all complaints of the character referred to, with a view to vindicating the law in all cases in which it had been sought to influence votes by threatened withdrawal of custom or employment, or where such withdrawal had followed upon votes given during the election. To my knowledge searching investigation was made in several cases by the Public Prosecutor, who is quite ready to continue to investigate all complaints of the kind brought before him. While there is little doubt that intimidation has been used and resentment shown in a number of instances, it is, unfortunately, also true that legal evidence, adequate to carry conviction of the offence under the statute, is but rarely obtainable. I am most anxious that a provision of the law essential to the freedom of election should be enforced, and will take care that whenever a *prima facie* case can be established a prosecution shall be instituted. At present there are two prosecutions under Section 2 of The Corrupt Practices Act, 1883, awaiting trial.

Promotion in the Army Pay Corps.

CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether commissions could be granted to the Army Pay Corps, which is at present the only unit having no outlet in the way of quartermasters.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Five warrant officers of the Army Pay Corps have recently been promoted to posts in the Army Accounts Branch equivalent to commissioned positions in the Army Pay Department, entry to which has ceased.

Afghan War, 1879—Prize Funds.

CAPTAIN FABER: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether there is any prize money in existence from the Afghan War of 1879 still unissued to the troops engaged; and whether he is aware that Lord Roberts in General Orders said that the prize money would be distributed as soon as possible.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I am not aware of the existence of the General Order referred to by the hon. Member. The Division Order issued by Lieutenant-General Sir F. Roberts on November 20th, 1879, which authorised the formation of a prize committee and the preparation of prize rolls, expressly warned the troops that its appointment in no way entitled them to claim the prize. Subsequently the prize was taken over by the Government of India and the issue of donation batta was sanctioned.

Case of Mr. H. Rovedine, late Draughtsman at Tidworth Barracks.

CAPTAIN FABER: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the case of Mr. Harry Rovedine could be reconsidered and employment found for him, seeing that this man had been draughtsman at Tidworth Barracks for five years, and was under orders to proceed to London to work under the officer of Barrack Contracts, when he was re-engaged under the Royal Engineers on the understanding that his employment would continue, and that he was then suddenly thrown out of employment.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Will the hon. and gallant Member kindly refer to a reply to a Question put on April 30th† by the hon. Member for the Thornbury Division of Gloucestershire, which deals with the case of this draughtsman.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Royal United Service Institution Lectures.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty on how many occasions since 1893 have proposals for lectures submitted by the Council of the Royal United Service Institution been vetoed by the Admiralty; and whether the lecturer in each case was an officer on full pay.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): Since 1893 there have been two cases in which the Admiralty have refused, in the interest of the public service, to permit an officer to deliver a lecture at the Royal United Service Institution. In both cases the officer was on full pay.

Naval Volunteers—Uniform Grant.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state how long the question of a grant towards the cost of uniforms of Naval Volunteers, on the same terms as to officers in the land Volunteers, has been under consideration, and on what grounds Naval Volunteer officers do not receive the same treatment as their brothers in the land Volunteers.

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† See Col. 225.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I hope to be able to make a statement on this point when Vote 7 is under discussion.

Royal United Service Institution Lectures.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War on how many occasions since 1893 have proposals for lectures submitted by the Council of the Royal United Service Institution been voted by the War Office; and whether the lecturer in each case was a regular officer on full pay.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): Each case is dealt with on its merits as it arises, by the particular Department concerned, but no combined record is kept of the various cases. I am not therefore in a position to supply my hon. friend with the information he requires.

The 3rd Seaforth Highlanders.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, having regard to the fact that the commanding officer of the 3rd Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Militia) was unable to secure a special steamer for the conveyance of the militiamen from Stornoway on April 3rd, and that the number of notices issued to militiamen in the island of Lewis placed within his knowledge the number of men who would have to travel from Stornoway, will he state why the owners of the Stornoway mail steamers were not communicated with in order that the number of men for whom accommodation could be provided at each sailing might be ascertained; and, seeing that a number of men were unable to secure passage from Stornoway on the date on which they arrived in the town, will arrangements be made for each man to be advised in future of the date of the sailing of the steamer by which he is to travel.

MR. HALDANE: As the notices are sent to the addresses given by the men at the previous training, and as many of them are often employed elsewhere, the number issued is no guide to the number likely to travel from Stornoway. The numbers that could be accommodated at each sailing were ascertained from the owners of the mail steamer. As regards the last part of the Question, the method to be adopted in future will be carefully considered by the General Officer Commanding in Chief, Scotland.

MR. WEIR: In consequence of the extremely unsatisfactory nature of the right hon. Gentleman's reply, I shall on the earliest possible opportunity call attention to this matter.

The Royal Dragoons.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will explain why the recently vacant majority in the Royal Dragoons has been filled by the appointment of an infantry captain, although not a few cavalry captains are actually on the list of officers noted for accelerated promotion.

MR. HALDANE: This appointment was made on the advice of the selection board, who considered that the claims of the infantry captain were the best.

Cost of Rifle Manufacture.

MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he is aware that, in the year 1901–2, the Government factories produced 107,642 rifles at a cost of £2 10s. each, whilst the War Office bought from the trade 137,030 rifles at an average cost of £3 15s. 5d. each; that in the year 1902–3 the factories produced 81,377 rifles at a cost of £2 11s. 0d. each, and the Government bought 90,000 more at £3 10s. each; and will he give the number and cost of rifles manufactured at Enfield in the years 1903–4, 1904–5, and 1905–6, and also the number bought from the trade, and the price of them, in the same years.

MR. HALDANE: The figures quoted are substantially correct. It must be observed, however, that the low prices referred to were for long rifles, now no longer made, and the cost of the special machinery for the production of these rifles has been charged and recouped in previous years. This has not hitherto been the case with the short rifle, but similar causes are now reducing the cost of the short rifle also both to the trade and to the factories. The Ordinance factories manufactured the following rifles in the years referred to, viz. :—

		£	s.	d.
1903–4	14,805 long rifles at	2	13	8
1904–5	67,180 short rifles at	3	18	5
1905–6	51,378 „ „ „	3	15	8

During the same years 135,000 short rifles were made by the trade at an average cost of £4 9s. 6d. For the current year both the trade and the factory prices are below the figures above quoted, and there is not likely to be any considerable difference between them.

Repatriation of Chinese Coolies.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can now say if the Government arrangements for facilitating the return of the Chinese labourers in South Africa to China have been communicated to the labourers.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): It has not yet been practicable to make a communication to the labourers, for the reasons which I stated in reply to the hon. Member for Newbury on Thursday last.[†] I have already stated that I hope to be in a position to communicate the terms of the notice to the coolies to the House on Thursday next.

The Flogging of Chinese Coolies in South Africa.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is now in a position to make any statement regarding the charges of cruelty and torture to Chinese coolies which have been brought against Li-Kiu-Lu, who was a Chinese police sergeant at the Langlaate or Crœsus mine in the Transvaal.

MR. CHURCHILL: It was reported to the Superintendent of Foreign Labour that Li-Kiu-Lu, police sergeant at the Consolidated Langlaagte Mine, was in the habit of flogging coolies, and in one case tied a coolie up by the thumbs: he was also accused of selling opium and gin. The superintendent had good reason to believe the report and took steps to cause Li to be repatriated. It was difficult to get the coolies to give evidence, as they were afraid of Li and of the Chinese controller, under whose directions it is believed Li was acting. The controller, a man named Witthauer, has been dismissed, and another appointed in his place, and the superintendent reports that in consequence the state of things is more satisfactory. Li was sent to Durban in course of repatriation, but was brought back to the Transvaal by order of the Supreme Court on his application for a writ of *Habeas Corpus* against the superintendent. He has now instituted an action against the superintendent for damages for false imprisonment and cannot be repatriated pending that action.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.) asked by whom the expense of sending Li to Durban was borne.

MR. CHURCHILL said the expenses of coolies repatriated for misconduct under the Ordinance were borne by the importer.

*MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury) asked whether any prosecution was to be instituted, seeing that this controller, Witthauer, had in the presence of witnesses admitted to the Superintendent of Foreign Labour that he had ordered the flogging of Chinese.

MR. CHURCHILL thought the circumstances conveyed in his Answer would suggest that the machinery of justice in South Africa worked very independently both of Government and other influences; but Lord Elgin had directed an inquiry to be made whether there was a case that would justify a criminal prosecution.

SIR HENRY COTTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is able to give any official information regarding the truth of the charges of torture and cruelty to Chinese coolies which have been publicly made against Messrs. Wilson and Sutherland, compound manager and police officer respectively, employed on the New Kleinfontein Mine in the Transvaal.

[†] See Col. 21-23.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has received the following information in a telegram from Lord Selborne: "An enquiry was at request of the acting lieutenant-governor held last month by Buckle, first civil magistrate, Johannesburg, into certain charges of flogging coolies of the New Kleinfontein mine. The enquiry was held on the mine and lasted three days. Johnson, who made charges, was given every opportunity of supporting them. All the Chinese coolies were marched past him, so that he might identify those he says were flogged. He selected eight. He gave the names of twelve European witnesses to Buckle, who, he said, could corroborate his statements. Eight of these were examined; the other four could not be traced. The eight examined flatly contradicted Johnson's statements. Of the coolies identified by Johnson as having been beaten, five entirely denied having been beaten or having either seen or heard of anyone else being beaten; the other three contradicted one another. Wilson and Sutherland were also examined, and stoutly denied the charges against them; other white employees on the mine were examined, and denied that any flogging had taken place. Mr. Buckle, in his Report, says that there is no corroboration worth considering of Johnson's charges of assault, while there is a considerable body of evidence contradicting them. He also says that from the demeanour of the coolies who gave evidence before him, he is satisfied that they are not terrorised into silence by fear of the compound authorities, and further that in his judgment Wilson is not a man likely to be guilty of brutality." Lord Selborne is transmitting Mr. Buckle's full Report to the Secretary of State by mail.

Cotton Growing in British Colonies.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give any information as to the progress of cotton growing in British Colonies, and any statistics showing the quantity of cotton grown under the auspices of the British Cotton Growing Association; and whether the House may rely on the Government giving all the assistance in their power to the furtherance of the object of this association.

MR. CHURCHILL: I will lay on the Table a Paper containing the complete statistics of cotton growing within the British Empire so soon as the returns for last year are complete. Meanwhile I shall be very glad to send my hon. friend the figures at present available for this year and the last four years. For the sake of brevity in an oral Answer, I will only say now that in 1902 the amount of cotton exported from British Colonies to the United Kingdom comprised only 827 bales, of the value of £4,742. In 1904 the amount had risen to 9,438 bales, of a value of £52,026; while the amount exported to all other countries, which in 1902 was 2,093 bales, of a value of £11,467, rose in 1904 to 12,037 bales, of a value of £61,475. The figures for 1905 are not yet complete. The amount of cotton grown under the auspices of the British Cotton Growing Association was in 1903 approximately estimated at 1,900 bales, of a value of £29,000; in 1904 this had risen to 6,000 bales, of a value of £80,000; and in 1905 to 14,200 bales, of a value of £190,000. The estimate for 1906 far surpasses all previous records, and the total crop is computed at 20,000 bales of a value of £330,000. I think these figures which exceed an arithmetical progression are highly remarkable and encouraging especially considering the brief period during which the experiment has been made. The multiplication of the sources of cotton supply cannot fail in the course of time, by averaging climatic risks, and consequently preventing unusual shortages to exercise a steadying influence upon cotton prices, with a resulting restraint upon cotton gambling. The Secretary of State is warmly interested in the work of the British Cotton Growing Association. The policy initiated under the late Administration will be maintained and I trust pursued. The Government is in cordial co-operation with the Association in the furtherance of its work, both by means of monthly conferences held at the Colonial Office with representatives of its council, and through the assistance which is given to its objects by the Imperial Department of Agriculture in the West Indies, and by the Governments of African Colonies and Dependencies.

The Native Rising in Natal.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the statement made on behalf of the Natal Ministry that Natal declines to seek the assistance of the Imperial Government in the settlement of the Native troubles; and, if a settlement is effected, by armed force, whether such settlement will be submitted for the consideration of His Majesty's Government and the House of Commons.

MR. CHURCHILL: I do not think I can with advantage add anything to the replies which I gave on this subject to the hon. Member for Blackpool yesterday.†

Tibetan Indemnity.

MR. O'GRADY: To ask the Secretary of State for India if the 2,400,000 taels to be paid by China as the cost of the Younghusband expedition will be allocated to the Indian Exchequer, as the cost was borne by such Exchequer; whether, having regard to the fact that a special commissioner was to be sent to Calcutta to negotiate a treaty of settlement with China on behalf of Tibet in the matter of the Younghusband expedition, he will say why such treaty was signed in Pekin instead of Calcutta; whether the Grand Lama of Tibet is still alive; and whether, as the result of the present treaty of settlement, the Grand Lama, if still alive, will be restored to power and place by the British Government.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): (1.) The indemnity payable under the Tibet Convention will be allocated to the Indian Exchequer. (2.) The negotiations conducted at Calcutta by the special Chinese Commissioner, having proved abortive, they were renewed at Pekin at the instance of the Chinese Government, and the Treaty has accordingly been signed there. (3.) As far as I am aware, there is no reason to doubt that the Dalai Lama is still alive. (4.) Neither the Tibet Convention nor the Treaty with China gives the British Government the right to interfere with the form of the Government of Tibet.

Processions in India.

*DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the recent suppression of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Barisal, by the police and to the arrest and fining of Surendra Nath Banerjee lately a member of the Legislative Council, for taking part in the conference and a procession, at which national songs were sung; and whether he proposes to restore the right of public meeting and of orderly procession in the province.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I understand that the case in which Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee was fined is now under appeal to the High Court at Calcutta, and until the appeal is decided I can make no statement as to the propriety of the action taken against him.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) asked whether native songs and processions were absolutely prohibited in India.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I do not think that Question arises. Undoubtedly it is not true, so far as I can learn, that processions are altogether prohibited in India; I do not for a moment believe it.

SIR H. COTTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam had issued a circular declaring such processions, and the utterance of the national song, "Hail Motherland," to be illegal.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I understand that there is a judgment of the court—I am not quite sure at the moment what court it is—that it is an illegal proceeding. Whether that is a sound piece of policy or not is another question, and I am considering the whole case of these processions and proceedings.

Indian Excise Revenue.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the resolution passed at the second All India Temperance Conference at Benares, on December 26th last, complaining of the rapid increase of the Government revenue from intoxicating liquors and drugs, which has arisen from £1,250,000 in 1870 to £4,076,681 in 1901–2, *i.e.*, had quadrupled within thirty years; and whether he will do all in his power to gradually substitute other forms of revenue, and cause the Government of India to seriously contemplate the gradual abandonment of the actual system of farming out the sale of such commodities by the Government, and the more immediate reduction of such revenue by restricting the number of liquor and opium shops and dens, and by discountenancing the licensing of such places near factories and schools and at religious and civil fairs, and by giving weight to the memorials and protests of the inhabitants of localities in India, averse to the drinking and drug-taking habits amongst its people of nearly every race and religion. The hon. Member further asked if the revenue had not now gone up to £5,500,000?

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† See Column 233.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: The revenue from the excise of liquors and drugs was £2,374,000 in 1870–1 and £4,076,000 in 1901–2 in sterling at the exchange rate of each date. As no accurate statistics of consumption exist, it is impossible to say to what extent the increase in revenue represents increased consumption. The population of British India has increased by 25 per cent., the duties on liquors and drugs have been frequently increased and the excise administration has been made much more efficient against smuggling. The settled policy of the Government of India, as stated by them, is to minimise temptation, and in that policy they are pledged to subordinate all considerations of revenue. A committee is now sitting in India to consider the administration of excise in respect of intoxicating liquors and to promote reforms. Opium and other drugs have been similarly examined, and I understand that various measures have been taken to suppress abuses.

Turkey and Egypt.

Mr. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the territory claimed by the Turkish Government in the Sinai Peninsula is confined solely to Tabah and neighbourhood or extends to the whole of the Peninsula, encluding the important quarantine station of Tor.

The SECRETARY of STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): The demands put forward by the Turkish Government have extended far beyond Tabah and its neighbourhood, and have rendered it necessary that there should be a joint delimitation of the whole frontier on that side, and that pending a general settlement the Turkish forces should retire from Tabah. This is what His Majesty's Government have asked from the beginning, but what the Porte has hitherto declined. The Porte is now being urged again to agree to it. I cannot say anything further as to the course of the negotiations at this moment.

Egyptian Boundary Pillar at El Arish.

Mr. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Turkish troops have removed boundary pillars placed to mark the frontier between Turkish and Egyptian territory in the neighbourhood of El Arish; and, if so, what steps are being taken to maintain the rights of the Egyptian Government in this district.

Sir EDWARD GREY: After this statement appeared in the press, His Majesty's Ship "Minerva" was ordered to proceed to El Arish to ascertain what has happened and to bring back a report, but it has not yet been received. Sir N. O'Conor has been informed by the Grand Vizier that a Commission will be despatched to make enquiries, and if the pillar has been disturbed to repair and replace it.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask if there are any Papers regarding the delimitation of boundaries between Egyptian and Turkish territory since the British occupation of Egypt that can be laid on the table?

Sir EDWARD GREY asked for notice of the Question.

Hague Conference.

Mr. BYLES (Salford, N): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign

Affairs, whether he can now inform the House of the probable date of meeting of the second Hague Conference; who are likely to be the British delegates; and what subjects for discussion will be included in the programme submitted by His Majesty's Government.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Some of the Powers have pointed out objections to holding the Conference in July, and it has been suggested that a later date should be chosen which would give more time for the consideration of the programme, which it is proposed to discuss. The programme is submitted by the Russian Government, who are the Conveners of the Conference. I cannot yet say what subjects may be added to the programme already published. The British Delegates have not yet been selected, but preparation is being made for a full consideration by His Majesty's Government, before the Conference meets, of the subjects, which will be, or are likely to be discussed at it.

MR. BYLES: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that at the last Conference the subject of an international agreement for the reduction of armaments was definitely left to the Signatory Powers to give——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order, that does not arise out of the Question.

Motor Bus Accidents.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the skidding of a motor bus, on the afternoon of the 24th April, in Seymour Street, Euston Road, which resulted in the wrecking of three four-wheeled cabs, the killing of a horse, and injury to a cabman; and will he state whether, in the interests of public safety, he can take any steps to require the owners of motor buses to provide serrated or roughened tyres to prevent side slips.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I have made inquiry and find that the facts are as stated in the Question. The Metropolitan Police do what they can in this matter under their existing powers as to the licensing of omnibuses; but they cannot insist on the adoption of any particular form of tyre; and it would be most undesirable to do so in the existing state of knowledge and while manufacturers are actively experimenting with new forms of tyres. The whole subject comes within the reference of the Select Committee of this House on Cabs and Omnibuses.

Irish Local Government Building Experts —Case of Mr. Francis Quinn.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will say on whose recommendation Mr. Francis Quinn has been appointed building expert to the Home Office for the Belfast and North of Ireland districts; what experience has Mr. Quinn had of building and contract work generally, other than the building of small dwelling-houses; whether Mr. Quinn is a member of the Builders Association in Belfast; and whether Mr. Quinn's standing amongst builders in Belfast is such as to inspire confidence in his appointment amongst those whose work may have to be criticised and reviewed by him.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member is, I think, under some misapprehension. There is no such post as that mentioned in the Question, nor has Mr. Quinn received any appointment from the Home Office. What has happened is this. It has been necessary on two occasions in the North of Ireland to call in expert advice on building matters; and the gentleman who was then employed being now dead. Mr. Quinn made an application recently that his name might be accepted and noted for similar employment when occasion arose. He was informed that his name would be noted, but no promise of employment was given him, and inquiries would of course have to be made as to his qualifications before he was engaged. I may add that the occasion on which it is found necessary to call in expert advice on these matters are very rare.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down S): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether Mr. Quinn did not produce testimonials from eight leading Unionists — professional Gentleman—in the city of Belfast?

[No Answer was returned.]

Administration of the Vaccination Acts.

MR. WILKIE (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether in view of the manner in which the Vaccination Acts have been administered, and the treatment to which some conscientious objectors have been subjected, mainly owing to lack of uniformity in administration, he will, in the circular he is about to issue, give instructions as to the manner of examination of poor applicants, and arrange that whatever ameliorative administrative improvements are issued shall be made applicable to Scotland, where, recently, respectable citizens have been imprisoned because they held conscientiously that this practice was not only useless but dangerous.

*MR. GLADSTONE: In the circular which I am about to issue I propose to draw the attention of magistrates to what I am advised is the real meaning and intention of the Act, and to suggest considerations which may properly be taken into account in dealing with applications; but I have no authority to give any instructions in the matter. The Act does not extend to Scotland, and the latter part of the Question should be addressed to the Secretary for Scotland.

Dock Regulations.

MR. WILKIE: I beg to ask the Secretary for the Home Department whether he is aware that the dock regulations for the protection of life and limb on board ships in docks and harbours, which came into force on January 1st, 1905, are being generally evaded; and, if so, will he take the necessary steps to secure their efficient administration.

*MR. GLADSTONE: It is no doubt the case that less progress has been made as regards compliance with the precautions prescribed by the dock regulations in the case of ships than in the case of the docks themselves; but it must be remembered that the difficulties are much greater, and I must also point out to the hon. Member that regulations 6 and 8 so far as they require structural alterations of a ship do not come into force till 1908. I am taking steps to strengthen the inspection of docks, and I would refer him on this point to my previous Answers of March 5th† and April 2nd.‡

New Spanish Tariffs.

MR. W. PRIESTLEY (Bradford, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that the Spanish Government propose from July 1st next to increase by 75 to 100 per cent. the import duties on woollen and worsted manufactures imported from this country, mainly from Bradford, and that it will be difficult for British merchants and manufacturers to complete existing orders by that date; that the new duties will be payable in gold instead of in silver as heretofore, involving a further increase of duty of from 15 to 30 per cent., according to the rate of exchange; and whether, in view of the effect on the textile manufacturing centres, and especially Bradford, he will state whether he proposes to take any steps to secure a modification or remission of the new tariff.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I am aware of the proposed new Spanish tariff which has been carefully examined by the Board of Trade in consultation with their Commercial Intelligence Committee and the Chambers of Commerce. Steps have been taken to bring to the notice of the Spanish Government the views of the British trading community as to the effect likely to be produced by the proposed tariff on British trade.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the French newspapers are protesting that the new Spanish tariff will have the effect of excluding French goods?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The tariff no doubt hits other countries just as hard as it does Great Britain.

Food and Drink Imports.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, the total value of imports of food and drink into the United Kingdom, from Foreign countries and British Colonies respectively, during 1905.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 74.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, clv., 170–1.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The value of the imports of food and drink (excluding tobacco) from Foreign countries in 1905 was £169,274,128 and from British Possessions £59,121,711.

Stafford Postmen's Promotion Grievance.

MR. C. E. SHAW (Stafford): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will explain why the appointment of inspector of postmen at Stafford has been given to a man who was at Shrewsbury post office, whose age is about thirty years, and whose length of service is about eleven or twelve years; why about twenty men at Stafford post office have been passed over, some of whom have been in the postal service from twenty-five to thirty years; whether the usual custom and rule of promotion in such cases has been strictly adhered to; and, if not, will he say why it has been departed from.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): There was no postman at Stafford fully qualified to perform the duties of inspector of postmen. I therefore felt it necessary to select an officer from another office in accordance with the usual practice in such cases.

MR. C. E. SHAW: Is it not the fact that one of the local staff was appointed *pro tem* to fill the position for fifteen months?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Possibly he may have been tried temporarily, but not successfully. I have not the facts before me.

Sub-Post Offices.

MR. DUNCAN SCHWANN (Cheshire, Hyde): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General how many sub-offices were closed during the year 1905, and for what reasons.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: During the year 1905, sixteen sub-offices were closed—eight through lack of suitable candidates, four through lack of business and two in consequence of re-arrangements. Of the remaining two, one was a temporary office and the other was abolished when the whole village was removed for the construction of a new reservoir. I might add that the total number of sub-post offices is nearly 22,000.

Merionethshire Education Inquiry.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can give the result of the inquiry he instituted in Merionethshire. I beg also to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the barrister he employed to hold the inquiry in Merionethshire insisted upon knowing the income and expenditure of the managers of every intermediate school in the county for the last six years, the number of pupils at each school during those years, and an estimate of the expenditure for the current year; will he explain why all this costly information was necessary; and how accounts for the last six years can have anything to do with the new conditions arising out of the Act of 1902.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The Merioneth county council desire to increase the grants from the county fund to the five secondary schools in the county which were established prior to the coming into operation of the Education Act, 1902, and consequently that the amount which may be raised in any year out of the rates for the purposes of Part II. of the Act shall be extended. The inspector who held an inquiry on the subject of this extension considered that it was material to know the income and expenditure of the schools in previous years, as well as the estimated expenditure for the present year, before he made his Report. The giving of the information should not, I think, be costly. Most of it was received on Friday last, and the rest has been promised. When it is received the inspector will complete his Report, and as soon as practicable afterwards a decision will be arrived at with regard to the subject matter of the inquiry.

In reply to a further Question Mr. Burns was understood to say that in his opinion, the inspector would not have been doing his duty had he failed to call for the information referred to.

Education—State Building Grants to Voluntary Schools.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state the years during which State grants were made in aid of the building of voluntary schools; the aggregate of State grants made during that time; the total number of voluntary schools, by denominations, in the building of which the State rendered assistance; and how much was the aggregate of building grants placed to the credit of each class of voluntary school.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. LOUGH, Islington, W.): I must refer the hon. Member to the Blue-book presented to Parliament in 1902, which gives full information on the subject. Building grants were first granted in 1833. No applications were received after December 31st, 1870, and the last grant was actually paid in 1881. Grants amounting to £1,766,854 were paid to 6,765 schools; 5,965, national or Church of England schools received £1,515,205; eighty-seven Roman Catholic schools received £50,579; 713 Wesleyan, British, and other schools received £201,070.

Schools Transferred to School Boards.

*MR. MASSIE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what number of schools held upon educational trusts have been transferred to school boards or county councils under Section 23 of the Act of 1870; whether any money consideration has been paid for the transfer; and, if so, how much.

MR. LOUGH: The records preserved in the Board's office show that previously to 1902, 1,383 voluntary schools were transferred to school boards under Section 23 of the Act of 1870. The records are, however, almost entirely confined to cases in which building grants had been made. Many of these transfers were for very short periods pending the erection of a school board building in their place. Of the 1,383 schools only some 600 are now used as public elementary schools. Since the Act of 1902, 180 transfers of voluntary schools under Section 23 have been sanctioned, and of these 161 have been completed. It was always held by the Education Department that only a nominal consideration could be paid for the transfer of a school under Section 23, except in the case where a debt was charged on the premises of the school. I do not know how many payments of this kind were made by school boards, but I believe they were few. Since 1902 the Board have sanctioned the payment of debts in thirty-six cases, and in those cases the transfer would be completed under Section 23. Of these cases thirty were British and undenominational schools, one Wesleyan, and five Church of England, the total amount involved being £14,437. In twenty-one cases the Board have sanctioned by scheme the alienation of school buildings, or an interest in school buildings, subject to educational trusts, to the local education authority for valuable consideration, but in those cases the transfer of the school would be completed under Section 19. In thirteen of these cases the transfer was effected by lease and in eight cases by sale; the purchase money, amounting to £12,026, was mainly expended in payment of debts.

School Grants.

*MR. MASSIE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what is the total amount of public money that has been paid to the managers or promoters of voluntary schools for the maintainance or building of such schools from grants and from rates respectively.

MR. LOUGH: As regards the period up to the end of 1902, the total maintenance grants from the Exchequer in respect of voluntary schools amounted approximately to £82,750,000 sterling; but it must be remembered that a considerable number of the voluntary schools in respect of which those grants were paid are not now in existence as voluntary public elementary schools. During that period no grants to such schools were payable from the rates. As regards the period since 1902, separate records have not been kept of the Exchequer grants paid to local education authorities in respect of voluntary as distinct from council schools; and I have no information as to the amount expended from local sources in respect of the maintenance of voluntary schools. The total building grants paid from the Exchequer to voluntary schools amounted to £1,766,854. But of the 6,765 schools which received those grants, only some

5,000 are believed now to be in existence as voluntary public elementary schools.

House of Commons Refreshment Department—Pensions for Old Servants.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Mid Derbyshire, as Chairman of the Kitchen Committee, if any provision has been made for pensions for waiters who have been in the service of the House for twenty-one years or over, or if he will consider the advisability of making such provision.

MR. JACOBY (Derbyshire, Mid.): No provision has been made for pensions for waiters who have been in the service of this House for twenty-one years and over. I have recently been engaged in considering a pension scheme for the permanent staff of the refreshment department. As the hon. Member is no doubt aware, the initial difficulty of a pension scheme is that of pounds, shillings, and pence. Subject to our financial position being favourable, and with the sanction of the Kitchen Committee, I hope to commence making provision for the purpose this year.

Ashdown Forest.

MR. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that large areas in Ashdown Forest have recently been devastated by incendiary fires; and whether, having regard to the frequency of these fires and to the injury they are causing to one of the largest and most beautiful tracts of common land within easy access of the metropolis, he will take steps to induce or enable the Conservators of Ashdown Forest, by legislation or otherwise, to more efficiently discharge their duty of preserving it from wanton damage.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden): My hon. friend has asked me to answer the Question. No communications on this subject have been received, and the Board of Agriculture have no jurisdiction in the matter. The control of the forest is vested in the conservators, who have ample power under the award to make by-laws for the prevention of incendiary fires. The hon. Member for South Somerset asks me to say that he will be glad to supply my hon. friend with a copy of the by-law at present in force on the subject. I may add that the annual election of four of the conservators gives an opportunity to the commoners to enforce their views if they think the precautions already taken are insufficient.

Consumption in Crofting Counties.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the statement contained in the public health circular of March 10th last, entitled Administrative Control of Pulmonary Phthisis, will he state whether arrangements will be made for the notification of the disease in each of the six crofting counties.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The question whether the Infectious Disease (Notification) Act should be extended to include consumption is one for the decision of the local authorities concerned. The procedure required to be carried through is set forth in Section 7 of the aforesaid Act. I have also to refer the hon. Member to Part IV. of the Local Government Board's Circular of March 10th last to which he alludes.

Local Taxation in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the incidence of local taxation in the island of Lewis have yet completed their inquiries; and, if so, will he state when the Report will be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. SINCLAIR: The inquiry is now being concluded in the island of Lewis, and the Report will be laid on the Table as soon as it is received and considered.

Scottish Fishery Statutes.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether arrangements have yet been made for penalties recovered for breaches of fishery statutes to be placed at the disposal of the Fishery Board.

MR. SINCLAIR: A Bill has been prepared and will shortly be introduced.

Continental Gipsies in Scotland.

*MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to the alarm excited in various districts in Scotland by the incursion of bands of continental gipsies; whether they are permitted to land as political refugees; whether more are arriving in detachments of nineteen or less, so as to comply with the new regulations under the Aliens Act; and whether the Government will take steps to provide for the safety of the public, to expedite the departure of the bands now in the country, and to prevent similar incursions in future.

MR. SINCLAIR: The gipsies referred to by the hon. Member are not, so far as my information goes, correctly described as political refugees. They state that they are merely passing through this country with an eye to business on their way to Italy. No question as to their admission or exclusion has arisen, as they have come in parties of less than twenty, the minimum limit affected by the Aliens Act. The Government are alive to the inconvenience caused by such immigrants, and have taken all possible steps to watch and control their proceedings. As regards the future I understand my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, in whom the administration of the Aliens Act is vested, is making inquiries, and is prepared to take any steps competent under that Act.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): Is there much "business" to be done in the districts the gipsies occupy?

*MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman and the Home Secretary would take into consideration the question of dealing with these gipsies under Section 3 of the Act as undesirables.

MR. SINCLAIR: No doubt that question will come before my right hon. friend.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): Cannot these people be dealt with by the ordinary courts if they break the law in any way?

*MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will point out to them the advantages of Meigle and Forfarshire as places of residence.

Vaccination Prosecutions in Scotland.

MR. WILKIE: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that in the administration of the Vaccination Acts in Scotland prosecutions and imprisonments of respectable citizens have recently occurred because of their conscientious objections to have their children vaccinated; and will he issue an order that, pending the promised inquiry on this matter, these prosecutions and improvements will be suspended.

MR. SINCLAIR: I have no information as to the particular cases to which the hon. Member alludes. The parish councils in Scotland have no power to make exception in the case of conscientious objectors. Prosecutions and imprisonments could not be suspended without alteration of the law. The Local Government Board for Scotland has from time to time advised parish councils that they may exercise a reasonable discretion in the matter of enforcing the statutory penalties, both in the case of a prosecution for failure to vaccinate a second child, and in the case of a second prosecution for the same child. In giving this advice, the Board has pointed out that, as default generally arises from negligence rather than from conscientious objection on the part of parents, it will be the duty of parish councils to use the most careful discretion where they relax the strict letter of the law in any case which may be brought before them.

Removal of Belfast Policemen.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what specific complaints were made against the two police witnesses in the Farrell case, which resulted in their removal from Belfast, and by whom those complaints were made; whether any animadversion was passed upon them for their evidence in the case referred to; whether they were afforded any opportunity of replying to any complaints; and whether he will now direct a reconsideration of the transfers or an independent inquiry.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Inspector-General informs me that no complaints were made by anyone against the two police witnesses in question, and that no animadversion was passed upon them for their evidence in the case referred to. The Inspector-General, when arriving at his decision that it was desirable in the public interest to transfer these men from Belfast, had before him their evidence given at the Court of Inquiry; and in both cases he was satisfied from that evidence alone that they had failed in the zealous performance of their duties. In these circumstances, the Inspector-General, in the exercise of his discretion, considered it unnecessary that any formal complaint or charge should be preferred against the men, and consequently they were not called upon to answer any complaint. The question of transferring men of the Royal Irish Constabularly from one district to another is one for the decision of the Inspector General, and I am not aware of any reason why I should interfere in the matter.

MR. MACVEAGH: Are we to understand the Inspector-General removed these constables without any complaints being made against them?

MR. BRYCE: He removed them in consequence of the evidence.

MR. MACVEAGH: Does the right hon. Gentleman think anybody will believe that?

MR. BRYCE: I really do not know the limit of human belief. I have stated the facts.

Colonel Smythe's Estate, South Westmeath.

MR. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland were the holdings and the tenants on Colonel Smythe's estate, in South Westmeath, seen by any inspector on behalf of the Estates Commissioners before the sale was sanctioned; how did the Commissioners come to sanction an agreement which an intermittent lunatic tenant was induced to sign to purchase a farm consisting mainly of a swamp at the price fixed on; will the Commissioners have this particular holding inspected before suing for payment of annuities; and if the price and the bonus have been paid to Colonel Smythe, will the Commissioners take any action to recover the excess?

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that agreements for purchase in respect of the estate of Colonel James Smyth of Gaybrook were lodged with them in August, 1905. The holdings comprising the estate have not yet been inspected, and it is not anticipated that the inspection will take place this year. The Commissioners are unable to identify the holding to which the Question refers, but if full particulars should be furnished to them they will have the matter inquired into when the inspection is being made.

Colonel Irwin's Estate.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that negotiations have been proceeding since August, 1904, between Colonel Richard Irwin and the Estates Commissioners, for the sale of the county of Roscommon estate of the former to the latter; will he say whether any definite offer has been made by either party; whether he is aware that three of the tenants, namely, James Gibbons, James Owens, and Nicholas Fahey, whose first statutory term rents were fixed out of court so far back as 1883 and 1885, and who have been, since that time, receiving voluntary abatements of from 20 per cent. to 25 per cent., have lodged originating notices to have there rents revised by the county court; and that, at the instance of the landlord, their applications have been transferred to the Land Commission; and, whether, in view of the character of the existing rents, he will secure for these applications an early hearing by the Sub-Commission, so that they may be decided before the purchase of the estate.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that the estate referred to in the Question is at present being inspected with a view to their making an offer for purchase under Section 6 of the Act of 1903. There are sixty-one tenants, and there will be a considerable quantity of untenanted land for distribution if the estate should be purchased. No definite offer has yet been made.

The three tenants named served applications in February last to have fair rents fixed. A Sub-Commission Court heard cases in the district in January last, and no further sitting has yet been arranged. The decision as to when it may be possible to hold a further sitting rests with the Land Commission, who are obliged to have regard to the claims of other districts.

Lord Longford's Rathwire Estate.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how the sale of Lord Longford's Rathwire estate came to be sanctioned without any provision having been made for the occupants of cottages there; will the sale of another estate of the same landlord be availed of to remedy this omission; and will a different inspector be sent to examine the condition of those cottagers.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the cottages referred to in the Question were not included in the sale which has already taken place on the estate mentioned. The Commissioners, however, are at present in communication with the vendor's solicitors as to the manner in which it is proposed that these cottages should be dealt with, and the matter will be duly considered by the Commissioners when the sale of the second portion of the estate is before them.

Irish Railway Rates.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any investigation into the rates charged by Irish railway companies for the transit of goods has recently taken place, and, if so, what was the result of such investigation; whether he is aware that preferential rates to Ireland are extended to British and other manufacturers, thus enabling them to undersell the Irish manufacturers, while no preferential rates from Ireland are extended; whether his attention has been called to the rates of charges for the carriage of the smallest parcels in Ireland and their effects upon all classes of the community; and if he will state what steps he proposes taking to remedy this condition of affairs.

MR. BRYCE: No formal inquiry into Irish railway rates has recently been held, but information on the subject is being constantly collected by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, and inquiries are made by the Department into all complaints respecting railway rates which they may receive. Information on the subject will be found in the Department's fourth and fifth Annual Reports. There are numerous exceptional through rates for manufactured articles between Great Britain and Ireland, but no instance has come under notice in which these rates do not apply in both directions. The rates charged by railway companies for the carriage of small parcels by passenger trains are regulated in each case by the company's special Act. The Department has, however, been instrumental in having included in several recent Acts provisions limiting the charges for such parcels to half the maximum rates for ordinary parcels traffic by passenger trains. I may call the hon. Member's attention to the reductions in parcels post charges which were stated by my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer yesterday, as tending to alleviate the evil complained of; and I may add that the whole question of Irish railways is receiving my consideration.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the rates charged on Irish railways are higher than those charged in other countries?

MR. BRYCE: I am not aware, but I should like notice of the Question.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I will give it.

Irish Local Government Auditors.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland on what grounds the Local Government Board acted in creating an entirely new and redundant office, carrying a salary of £900 a year, to an official who is charged with the duty of inspecting the judicial work of sixteen auditors, who are supposed to act independently and without supervision even by the Board itself; and whether, when sanctioning this rate of salary, the Treasury had before them the terms on which inspection of the same nature has been provided in England, where the work to be inspected involves the employment of more than seven times as many officials as are employed in Ireland, namely, eleven senior auditors, thirty-nine auditors, seven assistant auditors, and eighty-nine clerks, and where the present inspector, who was appointed to this office only last year, is in receipt of no more salary out of the Votes than his Irish counterpart.

MR. BRYCE: It is not a fact that a redundant office has been created, but a new office, namely, that of Inspector of Audits, was sanctioned by the Treasury as the result of a Departmental inquiry ordered by them in 1903 into the audit system in Ireland. Neither is it a fact that auditors are supposed to act independently without supervision by the Local Government Board. It is the function of the Board to assign to the auditors their respective duties, and to endeavour to secure uniformity of system and practice, but in arriving at decisions as to the legality or otherwise of expenditure, the auditors are required to act independently of the Board because the Board are constituted a Court of Appeal from such decisions. The Departmental Committee had before them full information as to the system of audits and the constitution of the audit staff in England. In fact one of the members of the Committee was the then inspector of audits of the English Local Government Board. I have no information as to the terms under which the present English inspector of audits holds office, but according to the Estimates for the current year the scale of salary is higher than that for the corresponding Irish officer.

Irish Local Government Board, Audit Department.

MR. MOONEY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the Report of the Departmental Committee which was appointed two years ago to inquire into the working of the Audit Department of the Irish Local Government Board, and of the correspondence which followed upon that Report between the Local Government Board and the Treasury; and will he say whether it was part of the bargain made on that occasion with the Treasury that, if they sanctioned an increase in the number and value of the appointments in the gift of the Board, the Board would make up some of the increased outlay by assessment on the resources of the local authorities over whom they have statutory powers in the making of these assessments.

MR. BRYCE: The Report of the Departmental Committee referred to is a confidential document, and it would be contrary to the established practice to publish such a Report or the confidential correspondence concerning the reorganisation of departments. The Answer to the latter inquiry is in the negative. The fee charged for each audit depends upon the volume of work done and the time occupied at the audit, quite irrespective of the number of auditors on the Local Governmet Board's staff.

MARINE INSURANCE BILL [LORDS].

Reported, from the Standing Committee on Law, &c., with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 150.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 150.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 182].

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Sir Benjamin Stone, Dr. Macnamara, and Sir Edward Clarke; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Cory, and Sir Robert Ropner.

SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill:

Mr. Osmond Williams, and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Owen Philipps.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILL.

LIGHT RAILWAYS BILL.

"To continue and amend The Light Railways Act, 1896," presented by Mr. Lloyd-George; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 181.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Emmott (Oldham) in the Chair.]

TEA.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That there shall be charged, on and after the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and six, until the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and seven, in lieu of the duty now payable on tea, the following Customs import duty on tea (that is to say):—

Tea - - - the pound fivepence."—(*Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) said that when he was dealing with the proposed reduction in the tea duty yesterday in his Budget statement he suggested that it should take effect from July 1st, that being the day from which his predecessor in office dated the corresponding reduction of last year. But representations had come to him from various quarters which he had had the opportunity of considering in concert with his expert advisers, and which satisfied him that in the interest, not only of the consumers, but of the trade, it would be well to accelerate the reduction; and therefore the Resolution which was read from the Chair gave the date of the reduction as from May 14th, which was practically the middle of the quarter. That would give the consumer the benefit of the reduction of the duty at an earlier date, and enable the trade to prepare for the situation by leaving unhampered their operations in the latter part of the quarter, while the loss to the Revenue would, he hoped, be very slight indeed.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somerset, Wellington) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could say what exactly the loss to the Revenue would be from the acceleration, and whether it would also affect the date of the Budget next year.

MR ASQUITH said that, according to the best estimate which could be formed, the maximum loss from the acceleration would be £80,000; but he hoped it would be considerably less. The acceleration would not affect the date of next year's Budget.

*MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said he understood that it had been arranged that the general discussion on the Budget and the broad issues raised thereby should be taken on this Resolution. It had been customary for the Irish Members to seize the opportunity afforded by the Budget to raise the question of the over-taxation of Ireland, and of the financial relations between that country and Great Britain. He did not intend on the present occasion to open in detail the whole question, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be the first to recognise that in a new House of Commons it was but natural that the Irish Members should seize the opportunity to raise the question, at any rate on broad lines. The financial provisions proposed by Mr. Gladstone in his Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1893 were considered by those who had studied the question so unsatisfactory, and based upon such loose and inconclusive evidence, that a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate the whole matter. He might recall briefly how the matter stood historically. It was provided by the Act of Union that Ireland was to contribute to Imperial expenditure only in proportion to her resources, or, in the words used by Lord Castlereagh in promoting the Union—

> "The ratio of Ireland's contribution will never exceed that of her relative wealth and prosperity."

The Commission was appointed to see whether Ireland's contributions had been, as promised by Union statesmen and provided by the Union, in direct proportion to her relative taxable capacity. It was a remarkable Commission; the majority were British; it was presided over by an admitted financial authority, the late Mr. Childers, an Ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, and included amongst its members such men of unquestioned fitness as the late Lord Farrer, Lord Welby, Mr. Bertram Currie, Sir David Barbour, and others; while the evidence submitted came from all the great financial experts of the country. The Commission reported that for the year 1893–4, Ireland had been overtaxed to the extent of £2,750,000. That finding was accepted by the Liberal Party in the main, and on July 5th, 1898, the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself voted in favour of a Resolution, which declared that—

> "The disproportion between the taxation of Ireland and its taxable capacity as compared with other parts of the Kingdom, disclosed by the evidence of the Royal Commission constitutes a grievance, and demands the early attention of the Government with a view to proposing a remedy."

Moreover, the finding was not universally rejected by the Conservative Party. It was supported by some of the ablest Members of that Party, the senior Member for the City of London, (Sir E. Clarke) in particular having made a series of remarkable speeches in support of the view of the Commission. Irish Unionists were unanimous on the matter, and even the Conservative Government did not put forward an absolute contradiction. What they said was that the investigation was not full and complete, that there were other aspects of the question which the Commission did not inquire into, and they suggested the appointment of a further Commission. But though the Conservatives remained in office ten years, that further Commission was never appointed, and hence he was entitled to claim that the finding to which he had referred held the field. In the fifty years prior to that Commission the taxation per head of the population in Great Britain had been reduced by one half. In Ireland it had been more than doubled. The population in Great Britain had increased by many millions, in Ireland it had diminished by 4,000,000, or 50 per cent. Exactly the same process had been going on during the ten years which had since elapsed. The population had further diminished by 250,000, and taxation had increased from £7,500,000 in 1893–4 to £10,500,000. This additional taxation had fallen on all classes of the population, but in a special way upon the poorest of the poor. One of the things that successive Chancellors of the Exchequer had some reason to be proud of was the fact that they had aimed at equalising the direct and indirect taxation of the country, and in Great Britain at present the two classes of taxation were about equal. But in Ireland the indirect taxation was about 75 per cent. of the whole, and an enormous proportion of the additional £3,000,000 of the taxation had been raised from the necessaries of life of the poorest of the poor. Had Ireland benefited in any way by this additional taxation? What was the cause of the increase? The simple fact that Ireland, a poor country, was tied up in a financial partnership with one of the greatest and richest Empires of the world. They were often told that they ought to be proud of the fact that though they were a poor country, at any rate they were in partnership with a rich one. But the direct effect of that partnership upon Ireland was that she was forced against her will to bear an excessive share of the cost of the enormous and bloated armaments of the Empire and of the periodical insane and wicked wars undertaken by the Empire. The Chancellor of the Exchequer on the previous day had drawn an appalling picture of the exorbitant expenditure into which the Empire had been plunged of recent years. But, after all, the representatives of Great Britain had some consolation. In Great Britain there had been a remarkable increase of population, and a growth of prosperity in practically every department of commerce and industry, so that although there had been such an enormous and unjustifiable increase in expenditure the people of Great Britain were more numerous and better able to bear it than they would have been ten years ago. But that was not the case in Ireland. One fact alone would be sufficient to show the cruelty of this additional taxation upon Ireland. During the ten years, the British Parliament had been obliged on three occasions—in 1894–5, 1897–8, and 1904–5—owing to acute distress over large portions of the country, to pass relief of distress Acts to save large numbers of the population from starvation. The truth was that Ireland was being taxed to death, and it was small consolation or sympathy they were in the habit of getting from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Last year the then Chancellor of the Exchequer made an extraordinary defence when he undertook to prove that Ireland's grievance was disappearing or had almost entirely disappeared. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Although you are paying £3,000,000 a year more, still the proportion which you are contributing from Ireland to the general expenses of the Empire is less."

The reason of that was perfectly plain. It was because in Ireland they had reached that danger point where taxes produced less and less the more their nominal value was increased. By that argument it only needed another war for Ireland's grievance to disappear entirely. It seemed to him that so long as the amount which Ireland had to pay towards the general expenses of the empire was not a fixed amount, but a fluctuating amount which depended from year to year upon the adventures and enterprises of successive Governments in this country, so long it would be impossible totally to remove this injustice. He remembered that Mr. Gladstone proposed—he thought it was in one of his Bills—to make the contribution of Ireland towards the general expenditure a fixed sum. He thought it was to be £2,000,000. The Irish representatives protested against that as an excessive estimate. They thought then, and they thought now, that it was excessive, but supposing it had been fixed, how many millions would it have saved Ireland during the last ten years? They were linked, they were told, with a great and rich empire, and that ought in itself to be of enormous advantage to them. It had not been of advantage to them. It had been the cause of their ruin. They were bound to pay a large share—more than their fair share according to the Act of Union—of the expenses of the enormous Army and Navy; they were bound to pay a share of the cost of the punitive expeditions which were constantly cropping up in all parts of the world, and more than their share of the cost of all the mad wars into which this country might be rushed.

What did this Budget do for Ireland? He was one of those who voted against the coal tax when it was proposed, and therefore he was not going to make any complaint that the right hon. Gentleman should take it off. But he could not help remembering that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was looking round for taxes to take off, the one he first selected was the only tax of which Ireland paid none at all, for they had no coal to export. It was worth noting that the right hon. Gentlemen, instead of removing a tax which would have helped Ireland in some degree, only removed one, no portion of which that country paid. As to the tax on tea, he was very glad that the right hon. Gentleman had dealt with it, but he regretted that it had not been more thoroughly dealt with. He would have preferred that the right hon. Gentleman had spent the whole of the surplus in taking the tax off tea. A penny off tea was very small, almost inappreciable, but as far as it went it would be a boon to the poor, and therefore in Ireland to the poorest of the poor. He made no complaint. But that was the only benefit Ireland got directly or indirectly from this Budget, unless the right hon. Gentleman was serious when he said yesterday that Ireland would get some material benefit from the lowering of the rates for the parcels post. He desired to make an appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of course he did not expect, he was not so foolish as to expect, the right hon. Gentleman to give them all they would like to remedy the injustices in Ireland at once, but there was one thing which he could do, and do immediately, which would be of enormous value to Ireland. He could modify and change the traditional attitude of hostility of the Treasury. Anybody who had ever had to do at all with Irish administration—the Chief Secretary was in his place, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would bear out what he was saying—knew that the Treasury had stood in the way of every Irish reform. His own belief was that the Treasury made money out of every penny it lent to Ireland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had spoken on the previous evening of the enormous increase in the cost of education in this country; he had said that the total increase in the amount spent on education in the last ten years in the United Kingdom was 60 per cent. That was about seven millions of money, but practically the whole of it had been spent in England and Wales. The amount of the increase of expenditure on education in the last ten years in England and Wales had been about six millions, in Scotland £787,000, and in Ireland £292,000. He had some very interesting figures, the accuracy of which would not be disputed, showing how the total expenditure on education was divided between England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The figures in regard to population he presumed were taken from the last census. The population of England was 34,152,977, and the amount of education grants was £12,652,548, or 7s. 4d. per head of the population. The figures of these grants were taken from the Estimates of 1905–6. The population of Scotland was 4,676,603, and the grants were £1,817,290, or 7s. 7d. per head of the population. The population of Ireland was 4,390,208, and the grants were £1,391,721, or 6s. 5d. per head of the population. That was to say, on these figures of last year's Estimate if Ireland got grants in proportion to the population of the country she would on the Scotch scale get £314,000 per year more and on the English scale £234,000 more than she did. He saw, looking at figures of the Estimates which had just been issued for the year 1906–7, that there was a net increase in education grants, amounting in England to £490,224, in Scotland to £154,838, and in Ireland to £1,502. Why was the basis of population, so dear to the heart of the Leader of the Opposition when he dealt with the question of Irish representation, abandoned in calculating these grants? He would tell the House why. Because of what he called a Treasury device which had operated is this way. In the year 1892 he thought the Treasury devised a rule that these education grants should be divided up in the proportions of eighty for England and Wales, eleven for Scotland, and nine for Ireland. They said that that was based upon the amount of Exchequer contributions received from the three countries during that year. He knew of no reason in justice why this ratio should come into the matter at all. It seemed to him that the fair and honest way of dealing with the matter would be to give equal education grants per head in England, Scotland and Ireland. Let him go a step further. Not content with having made this unfair rule whereby Ireland was robbed of hundreds of thousands of pounds in comparison with what was obtained by England and Scotland, the Treasury did not allow Ireland to get its due even under that ratio. He would give an example of what he meant. In 1902, when the Education Act was passed in that ratio of eighty, eleven, and nine, Ireland was entitled to £185,000 a year as equivalent grant. What became of that? Did it go to education? Was Ireland allowed to obtain the benefit of it, or did the Treasury keep its clutches off? No, it was put into the new fund called the Development Grant Fund, and the first thing that happened was that the Treasury put its clutches upon it and drew out of that fund—away from education altogether—large sums to make up the loss on the flotation of stock in connection with land purchase, so that even the money they were entitled to on the false ratio of eighty, eleven, and nine, was not allowed to reach education in Ireland. Let him give another sample of the way in which the Treasury treated Ireland. It was a small matter in itself, but he would like to call the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to it. There was a most admirable system in Scotland of industrial schools. These institutions necessitated a small State subsidy of, he thought, £2,000 or £3,000 a year. But the amount was every year put upon the general Estimates and voted to Scotland. A number of philanthropic people in Ireland endeavoured a year or two ago to establish similar day industrial schools in that country. It was found that a State subsidy of £2,000 a year would be required. Did the Treasury consent to that? No; they would not give a farthing. They turned round and said, "You have got your Development Fund Grant—take it out of that." That was to say, Scotland got her equivalent grant in full; Ireland got hers, but it was liable to all sorts of claims. Then charges like that for day industrial schools were sought to be shifted from the shoulders of the Treasury and put upon those of the Irish educational fund. In the same way at every hand and turn the Treasury was engaged in trying to rob Ireland. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Oh, oh."] He could assure his hon. friend the Member for Bolton that if he were as well acquainted with the Treasury proceedings as regarded Ireland as he was, the hon. Gentleman would admit that his language was exceedingly moderate. He was only stating facts. It had been the habit of the administration of the Treasury to make a special grant for the building of the national school houses in Ireland. That grant amounted to £35,000 a year; but suddenly, two or three years ago, the Treasury stopped paying it. It had been brought within his knowledge from many correspondents that the greatest inconvenience and injury had been caused by the fact that this grant was not forthcoming. In the county of Limerick a number of clergymen had told him that they had had plans of school houses prepared and that they had been waiting for three years, but were unable to go on with the building because of the want of the grant.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The sum of £35,000 is available.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Is it on the Estimates this year?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): It is on the Development Grant Fund.

*MR. JOHN REDMOND said he could not contradict the hon. Gentleman, but he had been looking into the matter and he found that the money had not been paid for several years past. This year a sum, not of £35,000 but of £15,000, was put not on the Education Estimates but on the Development Grant Fund. Not one sixpence of that ought to be on the Development Grant Fund. That was money which had formerly always been sanctioned and put on the Education Estimates. The Irish Development Grant Fund was now to be used to save the Treasury from the necessity of putting this money for school buildings on the Education Estimates from year to year. He maintained that that was a swindle. The Development Grant Fund was being used not for the purposes for which it was intended, but to save the Treasury from paying the sum which it had paid for years on the Education Estimates. Then what had been the action of the Treasury with reference to the administration of the Land Purchase Act? Everybody knew that that administration had been cramped and thwarted for many months through the Treasury's refusing to provide office accommodation and a sufficient staff to work the Act. Then nothing had been done in the way of the restoration of the evicted tenants to their holdings. He did not blame the Chief Secretary, but that right hon. Gentleman was omitted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer from the list of his Ministerial colleagues who were insistent in their demands on the Treasury.

MR. ASQUITH: I cannot allow that remark to pass without contradiction. My right hon. friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland is one of the worst of the whole lot.

*MR. JOHN REDMOND said that that did not satisfy him. The Chief Secretary had been beaten by the Postmaster-General and by the Minister for Education. Even at the best the Chief Secretary could only stand third, and he certainly ought to be first. Why was the evicted tenants question not proceeding more rapidly? It was not the fault of the Chief Secretary or of the Estate Commissioners. It was the fault of the Treasury, who, he was informed, would not give the necessary staff of inspectors to carry on the work.

MR. BRYCE: I may tell the hon. Gentleman that these inspectors are going to be given.

*MR. JOHN REDMOND said he was glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman had prevailed with the Treasury and had got the necessary assistance to the Estate Commissioners, but he complained that this demand had been refused for some time. Another thing of which he complained was that the Treasury staff of its own motion and without the request of anybody connected with Irish education, had ordered the National Board of Education to withdraw the £12,000 for fees for teaching the Irish language. The teaching of the Irish language was one of the subjects in which the people were much interested, and to allow the great national literary revival like that going on in Ireland to be hampered and interfered with by the action of a few officials at the Treasury was a proceeding which could not be defended. The period was drawing very near when some decision would have to be come to. There was the keenest anxiety to know whether in this particular the Chief Secretary had been successful with the Treasury. The one piece of legislation promised by the Government for Ireland this year was a Labourers Bill to provide facilities for the erection of decent habitations for the working rural population of Ireland. General Gordon had said that, having travelled all over the world and seen squalor and misery in every land, he had not come across anything so bad as the labourers' homes in Ireland. The success or failure of the Chief Secretary depended absolutely on the Treasury. Unless cheap money could be got for this purpose such as was obtained for the settlement of the land question it would be impossible for the Chief Secretary to bring in a satisfactory Bill. He begged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take into his serious consideration the hard and unsympathetic attitude which had always been maintained by the permanent officials of the Treasury in reference to every Irish proposal. Although the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not do anything more at present, he could inspire in his Department a sympathetic feeling towards Ireland and afford those financial facilities which the Chief Secretary was asking for to enable his Bill to be a success. Certainly the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to exert his enormous influence to do what he could for the poorest, and by far the most heavily taxed, portion of the United Kingdom.

MR. ASQUITH: I rise to respond to the appeal which the hon. Gentleman has made with so much force and moderation. He was quite right, though it was unnecessary, to remind me that I voted in favour of the Resolution which he has quoted, and I have not receded one inch in opinion or sympathy from the attitude which I took upon that occasion. I hope it is not necessary for me to assure him that within the limits of my possibilities and opportunities it will be my most earnest desire to give effect to that vote by translating it into concrete action. The hon. Gentleman has framed an indictment against the Treasury which I believe could be framed with equal sincerity and equal warmth by the representatives of England and Scotland; but I can assure him that from my short experience in the Treasury he is wrong if he supposes that that Department is animated with special hostility to Irish claims. The Treasury is a much abused Department, but it is the only watch-dog which this country possesses to guard the revenues of the country against inroads. I do not think that it is possible that a more invidious, unwelcome, and ungrateful task could be cast upon a body of men than that which falls on the officials in the Treasury of refusing demands or curtailing demands with which they themselves are in complete sympathy. For myself, as long as I have the honour to represent that Department in this House, I shall maintain that in this respect they do no more than their duty in the situation in which they are placed. But I am sure hon. Gentlemen will agree that the responsibility in the long run does not rest with the officials, and it is most unfair to put it upon them. It rests with us, and when I say us, I mean the Gentlemen who sit upon the Treasury Bench. The officials do their duty, but the entire and undivided responsibility for the decisions come to rests with those who represent the Department and the Government in Parliament. I am sure that the hon. Member will agree with me that that is the true constitutional principle in this matter. Therefore I take upon my shoulders the responsibility for everything that has been done or left undone since I came into office. As regards the Development Grant, that is not a creature of our creation; it is an incident of legislation for which we are not responsible, and I am not prepared to say that I look either upon its constitution or the regulations with regard to its expenditure as in any sense ideally satisfactory. But I will give hon. Gentlemen from Ireland this assurance that so far as my legal powers allow, I will see in educational matters particularly, where I think that Ireland has a real grievance, Irish funds are not encroached upon and that the Imperial Exchequer shall contribute all that can be expected from it upon any principle of justice having regard to fairness to the parts of the United Kingdom contributing to the Development Grant. The hon. Member knows, and indeed he stated in his speech, that the large automatic growth in the education grant for England and Wales is largely due to a circumstance which unhappily is not paralleled in Ireland, viz., the growth of the school population. The school population in Ireland has, however, been diminishing, while in England and Scotland it has been increasing. No doubt that is one of the circumstances of which hon. Members for Ireland naturally complain.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: And more per head of the population is given.

Mr. ASQUITH: I have not the figures in my head, but I will look into the matter. And with regard to education generally I assure the hon. Gentleman that he will not find anyone more sympathetic with the general desire he has expressed for a full and generous settlement than I am myself. With regard to the teaching of Irish, the Chief Secretary and I have come to the conclusion that the discontinuance of the grants was not due to us but to the cessation of the scheme under which it was taught. There have been criticisms, and I admit legitimate criticisms, as to the manner in which money was expended. My right hon. friend has framed a scheme which, I am sorry to say, owing to the pressure of other matters during the last week or two, I have not had time to consider, but I hope it will give satisfaction to everybody concerned. On the more general question I should like to point out, with regard to the figures which the hon. Gentleman quoted in the early part of his speech, what the facts are according to the most recent returns. I am quoting the return of 10th July, 1905—"Imperial Revenue; collection and expenditure in Great Britain and Ireland." I find from that return that the revenue contributed by and collected in Ireland in 1899–1900 was £8,664,000. In 1904–5, having risen in the interval during the war to £10,205,000, it had reached £9,753,000, and you must subtract last year at least £200,000 from that, leaving the amount collected in Ireland about £9,500,000.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: It is more than £2,000,000 over that.

Mr. ASQUITH: I think the hon. Gentleman quoted the figure £10,500,000.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: That was during certain years.

Mr. ASQUITH: Yes. It is true of 1902–3, but I think the hon. Member mentioned that as the present amount.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: It is only half a million less.

Mr. ASQUITH: It is nearly a million less. Then if you come to that amount contributed by Ireland in Part III. of this return, you will find there is a considerable diminution. I am not saying what was the cause of it, I am stating the fact. In 1899–1900 the contribution to Imperial revenue by Ireland was £2,676,000, and in the last year with which the return deals it had fallen to £2,186,000. The hon. Member will of course reply that that is not due to the fact that a smaller amount of revenue has been collected, but that local expenditure has been enormously increased. That is perfectly true, and it is an arguable question how much of that has gone to benefit Ireland.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): It is not a question at all.

Mr. ASQUITH: At all events the actual amount is not a question.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): It is a mere trick of book-keeping.

MR. ASQUITH: Perhaps my hon. friend will substantiate that statement. At all events there has been a large increase of local expenditure, amounting I think to £2,500,000. That is a matter which calls for serious inquiry, and I can give this assurance on behalf of the Chief Secretary and myself, and the Government as a whole, that we intend during the next year—in the course, I hope, of the next few months—to go carefully into this matter, and see how far it is possible to deal with it. I hope the hon. Member will not expect any specific pledge as to time and form at this moment, but we intend seriously with the best will in the world to investigate the whole of this expenditure, and see how far it is possible to adjust on a fairer basis what, I admit, is the unsatisfactory and inequitable financial relations between the two portions of the kingdom. I hope that the hon. Gentleman will accept that assurance for the present, which is given with the greatest sincerity and the full intention of redeeming it.

SIR ROBERT ROPNER (Stockton) said the late war could not have been avoided and the expenditure on it was necessary, but though the National Debt stood at the same figure as in 1871 the wealth of the country had increased, and the Debt was consequently lighter. He agreed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was right in his wish to reduce it as quickly as possible, though the fact that he was able to do so was mainly due to his predecessor. He (Sir Robert Ropner) was one of those who approved of the coal tax and agreed that the basis of taxation required widening. The tendency lately appeared to be to reduce indirect taxation, while making no effort to reduce direct taxation. The income-tax pressed very hardly upon a great many people. A Committee was being appointed, but in the meantime a great many people would think that instead of taking off the coal tax something ought to have been done for the income-tax payer. The coal tax, after all, affected only a certain class, and the hon. Member for Wansbeck, he thought, was entirely mistaken in presuming that the working collier would gain anything by its removal. He was certain that the tax was mainly paid by the consumer, and what was not paid by him was paid by the shipowner and the coalowner. Even if that were not so he thought, before taking off taxation which would affect only a certain class in the country, the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have tried to take off taxes which affected the whole of the people, and mainly the working classes. Speaking personally, he, as a shipowner, having to buy coal largely in foreign markets, would be a gainer possibly to some extent, but the matter ought to be looked at as affecting the whole country, and from that point of view he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of trying to benefit one class only, might have taken taxation off such things as sugar or tea to a larger extent, thereby benefiting a larger number of persons. Of course, the coal industry would be pleased, and the great influence they could bring to bear on the Chancellor of the Exchequer had brought him to see the matter from their point of view. In his constituency the question had not been raised during the recent election, and that had been the case in other Durham constituencies. He shared the view expressed by other hon. Gentlemen that the reduction of the tea duty by one penny would not benefit the consumers. It would no doubt benefit the producers, who had complained of being unfairly and very hardly treated by the imposition of the war tax on tea. They no doubt would be very pleased with the reduction, because they would derive the whole benefit. But in his opinion it would have been much better if instead of taking off this penny the right hon. Gentleman had taken off the whole of the war tax of 2d. If the right hon. Gentleman had retained the coal tax and had reduced considerably the taxes on tea and sugar he would have done something for the benefit of the people of the country.

*MR. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford) said that those who sat on the Liberal side of the House were pledged to economy, but they were also pledged to a number of far-reaching reforms which were inconsistent with any large reduction of the expenditure of the country. The House had committed itself among other things to the principles of old-age pensions, of the supplying of free meals to school children, of a large increase in the cost of education, and the payment of those Members of Parliament who were not in receipt of a salary as members of the Government. These schemes all required money, and it was impossible that they could be carried through concurrently with any large decrease of expenditure. It was true that they had pledged themselves to retrenchment in the great spending departments, but they could not delude themselves into believing that it was possible by those means to obtain sufficient to cover the additional expenditure which the social reforms to which they were pledged would throw upon the country. He therefore desired to ask the Committee to consider the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the light of the pledges made by the majority of the Members of the House. They might make considerable economies in the expenditure on the Army without decreasing its efficiency, and some small economies in the Navy, but they could not hope to make such economies as would provide sufficient means for such reforms as those to which he had referred. Therefore it was necessary to consider the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman in the light of the possibility of this increased expenditure. Coming to the proposed remissions of taxation, he considered the abolition of the coal tax a needless throwing away of a valuable source of revenue. The coal tax was not a protective tax except in the special sense that it was designed to protect our coal deposits. The Report of the Royal Commission which considered that question had shown that the coal deposits were larger than had been supposed and would last much longer than had been anticipated. At any rate, they would outlast our time and that of our children, and inasmuch as posterity had done nothing for us he supposed we should do nothing for posterity. However that might be, the fact remained that this was a very special tax, because it was the only tax paid by the foreigner. That was admitted, because if the tax was not paid by the foreigner why should he insert in his contracts a clause that if it was withdrawn he should have the benefit of the 1s., and why should the producer allow such a clause to be put in if he himself paid the tax? In view of the expenditure we had to meet, he thought that the coal tax should have been retained, but the tea duty ought to be reduced by at least 2d., so as to confer a tangible benefit on the poorer classes of the population. Whatever the sugar tax might have been when it was first imposed, everybody must admit that it was now a revenue tax, and therefore, much as he would like to see it reduced, he thought everyone must agree to its continuance, because of the revenue necessitated to meet the extraordinary expenditure which the programme put before the country would entail. But in all these matters, having regard to the fact that they were dealing with an increasing expenditure, the remission of taxation was necessarily very difficult indeed. It was only on those grounds that he approved of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's not reducing the income-tax. An income-tax of anything above 8d. in the £ was a war tax, and it should be reduced as soon as possible, but a reduction from 1s. to 11d. would satisfy nobody. The right hon. Gentleman had agreed to appoint a Committee to consider the question of a graduated income-tax. Every one would vote in favour of such a measure, but he thought that the Committee should have larger powers and should consider the whole question of taxation with a view to broadening the basis of taxation consistently with free trade principles. Whether we liked it or not, we should require in times to come not a reduced but an increased revenue, and in his opinion the time had already come to inquire as to the sources from which the revenue should be derived. He thought if the right hon. Gentleman would deal with the larger question when appointing this Committee he would find himself in happier case when in some future year he had to meet this Committee and make another Budget statement. Unless the right hon. Gentleman looked forward and considered the possibility of attacking new sources of revenue, he would have to make a very disappointing statement indeed. He respectfully urged the right hon. Gentleman to take this matter into his consideration.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): If I intervene in this debate it is in consequence of the statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer a few minutes ago in answer to the hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Irish Party, who brought before the House the ancient controversy with regard to the relative burden of taxation thrown upon Great Britain and Ireland respectively. I do not think any question can be more important in connection with the Budget, because on the view which the Government to-day take on that question must depend their financial policy. I confess I should have listened with great interest to the exposition of the views of the Government which the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have been expected to give in answer to the hon. Gentleman who initiated the debate, and I hoped to hear from him what his views were of the general problem of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland. I think he will be the first to admit that in connection with that very great issue he really gave no answer at all. He was extremely sympathetic—rightly sympathetic—to Irish financial difficulties. He made a declaration of Ministerial responsibility with which everybody will agree; he defended his subordinates at the Treasury in the spirit in which we all expect the Chancellor of the Exchequer to defend them; but on the really crucial issue raised by the hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Nationalist Party he was significantly silent. What is the issue in reality raised by the hon. Gentleman? The Members from Ireland take the view that, under the Act of Union, as interpreted especially by a Commission which sat some years ago, Ireland ought not at that time to have paid more than a twenty-first part of the total Imperial expenditure of the country. The proposition was laid down that to make Ireland pay more than that was to infringe the spirit and even the letter of the Act of Union; and though I do not think the Commission made any specific proposals which found general acceptance they certainly left an impression among a large part of the British community, which was eagerly endorsed by every Irish representative of all Parties, that Ireland was most unjustly treated in her financial relations. I want to know whether the Government do or do not agree with that general proposition, and if they do agree with it how they propose to remedy a grievance the existence of which by hypothesis they grant. I remember when this subject first came up for discussion in the House of Commons there was a great division of opinion among those who agreed that there was a grievance as to how that grievance should be dealt with. Some said it could be adequately dealt with if only a sufficient number of supplementary grants were made from the Imperial Exchequer for Irish purposes; others, including Sir William Harcourt, I think, said the method of grants was a demoralising method; another school thought that, even if you gave grants to Ireland and however large those grants might be, they were altogether outside the original provisions of the Act of Union, which dealt not with grants, but with taxation, and that the only possible method of remedying the grievance was so to adjust taxation in Ireland as to make it fit with what the Commission called the relative taxable capacity of the people of that country. Those, I think, are the only two solutions possible if you concede that there is a grievance. The Government, as I understand, do concede that there is a grievance. If I understood the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer correctly, he adhered to a vote which he gave in 1898 by which he and his friends affirmed the reality of this Irish grievance, although they did not then say how they thought that grievance ought to be dealt with. They had the right to refuse at that time any constructive responsibility for dealing with this subject; they were then in Opposition, and they were justified in maintaining on that aspect of the question an attitude of reserve, and in posing as critics merely, instead of offering any solution of the difficulty. But the circumstances have changed. They are now in a responsible position; they now have control of the finances of the country; they still hold, if I understood the statement of the right hon. Gentleman correctly, that there is a grievance which the Commission found, and which the Irish Members have insisted upon year after year for the last seven or eight years. But we have had no hint from the right hon. Gentleman how that matter is to be dealt with. All he has told us is that, in common with the Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant, he proposes to look into the manner in which the existing grants to Ireland are used and distributed, and if he finds they are distributed in a manner which is either uneconomical, inexpedient, or contrary to Irish opinion, he will do his best to readjust matters and remedy proved wrong. But that does not even touch the fringe of the question raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Waterford. The Member for Waterford restated his old contention with all his old force; he has not abated a hair's breadth of his old demand; and his old demand went, I believe, as far as to say that a different method of taxation or a different degree of taxation should be imposed upon Ireland from that which is imposed on the wealthier portion of the United Kingdom—England and Scotland. Do the Government agree with that view, or do they not? If they agree with that view, if justice does indeed cry out for that readjustment of taxation, then the Chancellor of the Exchequer has before him in future Budgets a task of unexampled difficulty. He will have to adopt a system which has been repudiated by every Chancellor of the Exchequer since the Union, and when he deals with indirect taxation—the spirit duties, sugar duties, or tea duties—he will have in each year to bring forward a Budget not based simply on the necessities of the United Kingdom, but a Budget modified so as to suit the capacity to pay of England and Scotland on one side and Ireland on the other. That will involve, if the Irish contention be correct, indirect taxation levied at different rates in the two portions of the United Kingdom. While tea, for example, is to be at 4d. in one country, it will have to be at 3d. in the other. That is the only method I can imagine by which an inequality of taxation can be remedied when you are dealing, as in the case of Ireland, almost wholly with the burden of indirect taxation. It is the indirect taxation which is the grievance, if there be a grievance; and the grievance can only be remedied by assessing indirect taxation at different rates on the two sides of St. George's Channel—[An Hon. Member: Abolish it altogether]—or abolishing it altogether. At all events, you will have profoundly to modify the system of taxation which has been adopted in this country for 100 years and more. You will embark upon an entirely new financial career, and I think will have before you difficulties of the greatest magnitude. I had hoped that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose to reply to the reasoned speech of the Member for Waterford he would have given some clear and explicit view, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, as to the policy which they think ought to be pursued in future with regard to the alleged injustice we annually commit towards our Irish fellow-subjects. The late Government, for reasons it was my duty on more than one occasion to explain, held that there was no injustice. The present Government voted when in Opposition that there was an injustice; they have not receded, as I understand, from the views they held in Opposition. How are they going to remedy that injustice? Merely for the right hon. Gentleman to consider with the Secretary for the Lord-Lieutenant how the existing grants in Ireland are distributed is to do nothing whatever to reach the root of this difficulty. If the Government are going to remedy the grievance by blind increases of the grants to Ireland they would, I think, be embarking upon a course which most thinking Irishmen will regard as intrinsically demoralising to their country. If, on the other hand, they are going to deal with it by manipulating the indirect taxation of the country, then I see nothing before us but the great difficulty that will arise from a different rate of indirect taxation in the two countries, which carries with it the inevitable consequence of a customs barrier between England and Ireland. You will require custom house officers in England to see that the tea or sugar, or whatever is taxed in Ireland at the Irish rate, is not smuggled over for the benefit of the English consumer, and you will adopt a machinery so costly, so clumsy, and so embarrassing to trade that I cannot believe any Government would seriously endeavour to deal with the situation by that machinery. As the question has been raised, as you have allowed, I am sure rightly, this debate to be started on the Budget of the year, we ask from the Government a clearer view of their policy than anything which the right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to give on the present occasion; and I trust that when he comes to reply on the general subject he will do something more than he has already done to satisfy the Committee upon a question with regard to which curiosity must be greatly aroused by the short debate which has just occurred.

Whilst I am on my legs may I press the right hon. Gentleman a little more upon a point I raised yesterday, and upon which, I think, he has made no reply? He laid down yesterday, I think for the first time, the principle that no naval or military works shall ever be constructed out of borrowed money. I think that a deplorable position. I should like very much that the right hon. Gentleman should justify, if he can, laying down a view of such wide extent, and which may have such important bearings. I entirely agree with him that a system of loans, like all systems, is open to abuse. I entirely agree with him that a Government may be tempted to embark upon undertakings which have been rendered, as it were, unduly easy by the fact that they are to be carried out by borrowed money, and that the burden of carrying them out will be thereby spread over several years, during some of which years they may, perhaps, no longer be responsible for the conduct of public affairs. I make that admission because I do not wish to overstate the case. Will the House just consider the other side? I think it possible that in the last ten years we have carried out all the great works which are absolutely necessary for naval and military efficiency—that is, either they have been carried out or are in process of being carried out, and there may be, therefore, in the next few years no necessity for again dealing with millions in the construction of new dockyards, new barracks, and all the rest of it. But the mere fact that the late Government did its duty is really no ground for the present Government's laying down the principle that is to bind themselves and, so far as they can, their successors if great works should have to be constructed. I do not believe these great works can be constructed except on the principle of loan; and if you attempt to construct them upon any other principle I believe you will find the work will be done in the most extravagant manner possible. Just consider what will take place. The First Lord of the Admiralty may come down and say: "It is absolutely necessary that we should have a great harbour at such and such a point." The Chancellor of the Exchequer says: "If that is to be done, the yearly work must be paid for out of the yearly income. Are my colleagues prepared to put an additional penny on the income tax, or add something on to tea and sugar?" His colleagues in the Cabinet are unwilling to incur the unpopularity of such a proceeding, and unwilling to dislocate trade by putting on a tax for a temporary purpose. They say either that the work shall not be carried out at all—and that is dangerous to military and naval efficiency—or they say: "We will carry it out by small annual instalments." Instead of spending in each year as much as the works themselves will bear and finishing them in three years, the works will take perhaps from nine to twelve years to finish. Both of these courses are open to grave objection. The first involves danger, but the second is the most extravagant course you could possibly adopt. The method of dribbling out payments year by year to contractors is exceptionally ineffective, and no good business man who knew his business would ever consent to it. It is as extravagant a policy when pursued by the nation as when pursued by an individual or a corporation. Therefore there is no other possible course for executing great works than proceeding by loan; and I do earnestly press upon the Government that they should modify the official declaration of policy laid down yesterday by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If he chooses to say that in the opinion of the Cabinet the great works which the country requires are, so far as the present Government know, either completed or in process of completion, and that they see no immediate necessity for carrying out further great works, we should all welcome that statement, and for my own part I have no reason to think I should dissent from it. But when we see how naval distribution, the sizes of ships and guns, and the costly and ever varying appliances of naval warfare change from year to year, can any of us look forward with security to a lengthy period of time when some great capital expenditure will not be required by this country? Until such a time comes it would be a most unbusinesslike departure to say that the rapid, and therefore economical, carrying out of great works is to be abandoned because the chiefs of the Treasury are afraid that if you once permit the system of loans to be adopted you have no further control over the spending departments. There are Gibraltar, Portland, Dover, Malta. and Keyham Dockyard, at which works are necessary, and they cannot be carried out except by an expenditure of millions. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not envelope himself in a cloak of financial virtue because his predecessors in office, unwillingly indeed, but purely on patriotic and public grounds, felt it their duty to bring these great establishments up to the level of our Imperial needs. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer announced last year, and with general approval, that, so far as the works in hand were concerned, he proposed to deal with everything that had to be dealt with out of current taxation. I think he was right. All I complain of is that the principle should be laid down in regard to an unknown future—a future which may bring with it great unknown contingencies which could only be dealt with by capital expenditure, and which it would be folly for us to attempt to deal with out of the taxation of the year. Therefore, I press upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer these two questions. The first is as to the policy of the Government with regard to bringing to an end what they consider erroneously is an injustice to Ireland in the matter of taxation; and the second, whether they really mean to lay down in the absolute manner the right hon. Gentleman yesterday suggested that never under any circumstances are loans to be made for carrying out great works of public necessity

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he would only trouble the House for a few moments to deal with the observations made by the Leader of the Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had put forward to-night the old demand which had been made from the Irish Benches for many years without any alteration. That was absolutely true. The only alteration was that the hon. and learned Member for Waterford was now able to address his criticism and questions to a Chancellor of the Exchequer who had voted for a Resolution in favour of the findings of the Royal Commission. What was the old demand? It was that the grievances of Ireland as advanced in the Resolution passed in 1898 should be taken into consideration by the Government, and that the demands of that Resolution should be complied with. One of the strongest motives he had in rising was to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer not to accede to the request of the Leader of the Opposition, and not to-night to go into the sea of complications which would arise if he had to face the problem of how he would meet that grievance, and to say what alterations in taxation he contemplated proposing if he intended to deal with the grievance in that way. They at least made no such unreasonable demand. What they demanded was that the right hon. Gentleman should give the matter his fair and honest consideration, and apply his mind to devising a remedy. They were prepared to give him time to consider the problem which they all admitted was a difficult one. The Leader of the Opposition had also said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had evaded most carefully, and was significantly silent on, the crucial points put by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford. He had sought to confine the Chancellor of the Exchequer to a promise that he would consider how the present grants were allocated, and see how they could be improved. They placed no such interpretation upon what the right hon. Gentleman had said. What the Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised was that he would consider the problem, and that he hoped to propose some remedy for the grievances of Ireland. No attempt to alter the allocation of the local grants in Ireland could possibly supply a remedy for this admitted grievance. He would like to emphasise the warning already given by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford against the policy of so-called economies in Ireland. Some years ago, he supposed partly as a remedy for the financial grievances of Ireland, Lord St. Aldwyn introduced the system of development grant as a remedy for some of their grievances. The idea was that a system of economy could be devised under which the economies would be for the benefit of Ireland. Lord St. Aldwyn, who was an astute financier, thought by this ingenious device to enlist the Irish representatives and people in the cause of economy. He had often complained that he never got any support from the Irish representatives. That was perfectly true, because this device would only be another instrument for relieving the British Exchequer at the expense of Ireland. What had happened? This grand scheme of economy did to a certain extent, as was anticipated, enlist some of the Irish people in support of economy. When the Development Grant was set up they were led to expect great results. It was immediately fastened on by the Treasury, and burden after burden and charge after charge which had been borne in the past by the Treasury was shoved on to the Development Grant, and the Irish people very soon found that their economies were all stolen from them. He therefore warned the Chancellor of the Exchequer that any attempt to develop on these lines would be met by strenuous opposition on the part of Irish Members, because they had already learned the lesson that they had nothing at all to expect from economies of that kind. To his amazement the Secretary of the Treasury had attempted to traverse the statement of the hon. Member for Waterford in one of these matters. For thirty or forty years, in spite of the injustice admittedly done to Irish education, they had had a regular grant of about £35,000 from the Treasury for the building and repairing of the national schools. That was stopped two or three years ago, and the Irish Members had been bombarded with letters from all parts of Ireland where the schools were not fit to be used, and with requests to be informed why these building grants were being stopped. In the year 1902 a Committee was appointed and made a secret report, and for two years before that this question had been under the consideration of the Treasury and of the Board of Education in Dublin, and yet, in reply to a question, he was told last month by the Chief Secretary that the matter was of a very complicated character and that they were not yet able to come to a conclusion with regard to it. Last year when he raised this question the then Chief Secretary said they were going to do something generous, that they would grant a considerable sum in addition to £15,000 for the schools. He then asked him whether that was a substitute for the £35,000 and he could not tell. The right hon. Gentleman first said one thing and then another, but he himself had since discovered that they intended to give Ireland the £120,000 in order to get rid of the permanent charge of £35,000 a year. That to them was the result of this six years consideration. He would like to know was it or was it not true that the Treasury were endeavouring to get rid of this permanent charge, and was the Secretary to the Treasury prepared to get up and justify the way in which education was treated in Ireland, and would he defend the way in which these finances had been dealt with? It was by proceedings of this character that their faith in grants as a remedy for the waste by the Irish Government was destroyed, and in his opinion until there was some authority responsible to the Irish people no economy of expenditure in Ireland could be effective of the good that they looked for. What benefit to the country could it be to plan economies, and then give the funds to Dublin Castle to be distributed? Those in touch with the popular mind should have some voice in the distribution of the Development Grant. But there had been none. It was all settled in the Castle behind their backs, and therefore he said to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it was not in that direction that relief could be found. They were gratified by the tone of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to-day. They were perfectly content to give him time to consider the whole matter, and they trusted that when he had had time to go into it fully his consideration would bear some substantial fruit to the people of Ireland.

*SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W. R. Rotherham) said he was glad to have the opportunity of supporting the Budget proposals which the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced yesterday. Considering the resources which were at his disposal it was clear that it would have been impossible for any Chancellor of the Exchequer to propose anything that might be described as heroic finance. He thought the surplus would have been larger if the home trade had been as good as the export trade. The Board of Trade Returns showed that the figures were highly satisfactory last year in regard to exports and imports. Our external trade left absolutely nothing to be desired, but there appeared to have been a shortage in the home trade. He was glad to think that the home trade was now distinctly better than it was a short time ago. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would agree that it was unfortunate that they had not reliable statistics available by which the exact position of our home trade could be ascertained. He was glad that the President of the Board of Trade was now making proposals that there should be taken periodically an industrial census. He hoped the traders of the country would support the right hon. Gentlemen so that the census might be made complete and accurate. If we had an adequate census as other countries had we should have material upon which to form from time to time a reliable opinion as to the condition and growth of the home trade. They were under a debt of gratitude to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the very full account he had given of the nature and extent of our national indebtedness. The Budget was particularly well balanced, and he had no doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer would next year make more sweeping proposals to reduce indebtedness and maintain British credit. There was a certain literary family of whom it was said that the mother wrote novels which no one would buy, that the daughter wrote poetry which no one would read, that the son wrote plays which no one would act, and that the father wrote cheques which no one would cash. There was no danger of the Chancellor of the Exchequer being in such a position. He would always be able to cash his cheques, but u less our credit were well maintained he would not be able to cash them on the most favourable terms. In view of the regrets which had been expressed in various quarters of the House that the coal tax had been swept away he wished to say that he strongly approved of the decision of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in that matter. He thought the choice was a wise one. Indeed, sitting as he did for a mining constituency he had pledged himself to support the repeal of the tax. He was quite prepared to argue the case on the merits. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not proposed the repeal of the tax he would have undertaken to move an Amendment to get rid of it. He was glad the Chancellor of the Exchequer had saved him the trouble of doing anything of the kind. The removal of the tax would confer substantial benefit on labour, and, in his opinion, the inevitable result would be fuller employment for those engaged in the trade. The tax had been a hindrance to trade, and if the Government could not do anything to help the coal trade, let them leave it alone. An hon. Member opposite had quoted figures to shew that there had been no injury to the coal trade on account of this tax, and had stated that there had been a slight advance in the amount of the exports of coal. But he submitted that the question was, how much greater would have been the increase of those exports had it not been for the existence of the coal tax? Its effect was exactly as if our Government had insisted on every other country in the world putting an import duty on all coal received from the United Kingdom, but allowing it to come in free when it was received from any other country. The idea was ridiculous. It would not bear arguing. Therefore it was high time that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should come forward and sweep away such an unfair tax. They were told that it was a tax which was paid by the consumer, and not by the producer. The consumer would not pay an import or export duty if he could help it, but he could escape paying the export duty by buying from other countries. That was proved by the fact that coal contracts had gone to France and Germany and that employment in our own coal industry had been diminished in consequence. He hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would bring in as speedily as possible the Bill which he had promised to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee on Industrial Alcohol, so that it might have a chance of passing this session. He sat on that Committee and they investigated the whole question with the greatest care and diligence.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I should like to have the opportunity of saying a few words on the general aspects of the Budget which has just been presented. At the outset I would like, on behalf of my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, to express my sincere appreciation of the very kind and courteous way in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer noticed his enforced absence. My right hon. friend, who has suffered very severely from a most painful, if not a dangerous, indisposition, had hoped to be present at our debates. He is much disappointed that he cannot be here, and I am sure he will be grateful to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the kindly way in which he spoke of him. The Budget itself I am inclined to characterise as a whole in the terms which seem to be common to the appreciations in the Press this morning. It is a humdrum, a commonplace Budget. That by no means necessarily implies any condemnation. On the contrary, in the case of a Radical Government, I am not certain that it is not the highest praise. When I think of all that has been said on the subject of our financial extravagance and of the incidence of our taxation, and when I think of all the promises that were made at the election, and before the election, by the supporters of the right hon. Gentleman, and even, I think, by some of his colleagues, if not by himself, I really think we are very well out of it. The terrible things that we were led to anticipate have, fortunately, not been presented to us; and I for one am extremely grateful to the right hon. Gentleman that, being as he is the master of so many legions, he has been so merciful to his opponents and those who have differed from him, and has in fact produced a Budget which we are unable seriously to oppose, for, indeed, it is our Budget. The surplus is ours. We provided it, it cannot be doubted for a moment, by the extremely conservative Estimates of my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, who refused to take advantage beforehand of what was apparent even at that time, that we were on the eve of a period of increased prosperity, and framed his Estimates on a very moderate scale, and has allowed his successor to reap the advantage. The surplus is ours, and these Estimates, it appears, are ours. I must call the attention of the Committee to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. He began by deploring his own incapacity—I do not mean his personal or intellectual incapacity, but his own inability—to deal as he would have liked to do, with a free hand, with the finances of the country. "No," he said, "we found ourselves in fact committed by our predecessors by their Estimates. We have only had four months to consider those Estimates, and in that time we have not been able to alter them." He pays us a great compliment, but he does not do sufficient justice to himself and his own powers. I deny absolutely that he, at any rate, has found himself in this position of enforced inability to alter our Estimates. I have always understood that the preparation, the natural and particular preparation, for the Budget by any Chancellor of the Exchequer is a matter of three or four months. The right hon. Gentleman had three or four months, and in the course of that time there was not an Estimate that was made by the late Government which he had not in his power to alter. I am very glad he did not alter them. I have never had any hesitation in supporting the Estimates and the financial policy of the previous Government in the circumstances in which they found themselves. But the right hon. Gentleman cannot have it both ways. He cannot appeal for credit to those below the gangway both for his reforming instincts and intentions and pretend that he is unable to give effect to them because this wicked Government has disappeared from the scene not more than four months ago. No, sir, the right hon. Gentleman and his supporters, who went up and down the country, had no hesitation while the late Government was in office in criticising our estimates. They did not want time. They knew exactly where to make economies. There were so many millions to come off the Army, so many millions to come off the Navy, and the Civil Service was to be cut down. There was not the slightest profession then of inability. On the contrary, the country was informed that, if only they could take our place at once, without any further inquiry these great changes would be made, and these splendid opportunities would be offered, of which the Government would take advantage, in order to carry out the series of gigantic social reforms for which they professed the country was pining. I observe that even in the course of this debate, languid as it has been, there are some hon. Gentlemen on the other side who are sufficiently consistent, whose memories are long enough to go back three or four months when they were making these professions, to repeat them in the House of Commons. And we have been told accordingly that there is, naturally, some discontent that a system of old-age pensions, which was to cost only the mere trifle of £30,000,000, has not been at once put before the House of Commons by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. I say you cannot have it both ways. I do not object in the least to the claims of the right hon. Gentleman that four months is not long enough to make these great changes in the financial arrangements of the country. I do not complain that he should ask for more time to consider what he would do with the increased surplus which he anticipates next year, and with the increased revenue upon which also he appears to be counting; and I am quite prepared to accept his view that the Budget for which we are all waiting, the sensational Budget, we must not expect till next year, when the right hon. Gentleman has had time to make himself acquainted with the simple facts of the case. But, then, from that it follows that he was not acquainted with the simple facts of the case at the time that he and his colleagues professed to know everything about it, at the time when he was offering these tremendous temptations to the country.

MR. ASQUITH: What temptations?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Old age pensions. Does the right hon. Gentleman say that neither he nor his friends offered the temptation of old age pensions?

MR. ASQUITH: I never did.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Then the right hon. Gentleman does not share the views of the hon. Members below the gangway?

MR. ASQUITH: If the right hon. Gentleman wants to know my views on the subject, I can refer him to a speech I made in the House about a month ago.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am extremely sorry to say I think I could not have been present when that speech was delivered, and in those circumstances I am unable to take advantage of the information the right hon. Gentleman has conveyed. I can only go back to what I said. I gather that whatever that speech was, it did not indicate on the part of the right hon. Gentleman an assent to those views which were put forward during the election by so many of his supporters, which have been put forward during the present debate and which suggest and practically promise a universal old age pension of 5s. a week at the age of sixty, a proposal which would cost £30,000,000. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen opposite think it courteous to interrupt me, and apparently they think it accurate to suggest that at all events if they made these promises they had the excuse that I had made them before. Well, I do not think that is a good excuse because if I, by hypothesis, made such a promise and was not justified in making it, it is no excuse for their falling into the error, the fault or crime which they attach to me. But now I say emphatically, and I defy them to prove to the contrary, that I never have, in the whole course of my political life, made any promise of old-age pensions whatsoever. That is the first thing. And, moreover, I go beyond that when I say that whenever I have had an opportunity of dealing exhaustively with this subject, whether it be in the House of Commons or on the platform at the time of elections, I have warned both Members of the House of Commons and also my friends or opponents in the country that no such promise could be honestly made by any one who was acquainted with the facts of the case. I have been led into a vindication which is apart from criticism of the Budget; but I repeat, all I have done in reference to this matter is to express my own sense of the necessity of enabling the industrious working people to make a better provision for old age, and to put before the working people of this country one or two circumstances, two plans in particular, which I have said, and which I maintain are perfectly simple and clearly to be understood, which are within the reach of the working classes of this country, and which are practical schemes which could be considered with some chance of giving effect to them by the present House, or even by past Houses of Commons. That is my part in the matter, and I still think that this better provision ought to be and should be made by the House of Commons. But it is not, and never will be so far as I am concerned, a proposal for anything in the nature of a universal old-age pension, which I believe is impracticable from the point of view of its expense, and which I believe is immoral and undesirable from the point of view of its influence upon thrift and industry.

When I was interrupted I was pointing out the conclusion at which I arrive, that if the present Estimates of the Government are extravagant Estimates, then let the Government have the courage to take full responsibilty for them. They cannot throw the responsibility for the Estimates which they have presented to the Committee upon the shoulders of a defunct Government which died four months ago, and since whose decease they have had ample time to revise, improve, and amend the Estimates if they thought such amendment and improvement desirable and necessary. If they will take the responsibility of these Estimates on their own shoulders, I rejoice—I am glad to find that all this flurry and electioneering method is disappearing in the presence of greater responsibility—that promises which they and those acting on their behalf were so ready to make are found now by confession to be unreasonable or impracticable, and have to be postponed till further inquiry, which is to take the form of personal inquiry by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and further inquiry by committees and commissions, of which you may have any number as long as this Government continues in office.

Now, having admitted that the Estimates are wholly the work of the present Government [MINISTERIAL laughter]—wholly the work (OPPOSITION cheers)—what did the country give you a majority of 350 for if it was only to accept without question the proceedings of the late Government which you believed to be wrong? If you believed them to be right then, of course, you are right in accepting them though they come from your opponents; but you cannot in the same breath declare them to be wrong and not take any steps to alter them. I say that not merely is the surplus ours, not merely are the Estimates ours, but practically the policy of the Budget is ours; substantially not entirely. What was the opening of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, a most elaborate opening, which occupied a very considerable period, and filled me with hope? It was to point out the terrible position of this country in regard to its Debt, and the obligations made by the war. To do the right hon. Gentleman justice, he is not one of those who lay the burden, the blame of that war entirely on the late Government. And let me say in passing, though it is not relevant to the argument and it is not necessary for me to deal with it at length, but in view of what has been said, do let our friends on the other side understand that not in the slightest degree, not by one atom, have we changed from the position we took up before the war and during the war. We regret the loss of life in the war and the loss of treasure; but we believe, as many hon. Gentlemen on the other side and the right hon. Gentleman also, believe, that the war was forced upon us, and that it was absolutely necessary if we were to preserve our hold on South Africa and the union, respect, and loyalty of the Empire. The expenditure on the war was enormous, and it enormously increased the Debt of the country, and the right hon. Gentleman dealt with all this. I confess I make one criticism upon his language. I think he is too pessimistic. After all, we are a very rich country; after all, we are very much more powerful than we were; and I think it is a mistake, considering what may be said outside this House and in other countries, to exaggerate the sacrifices we have been called upon to make. I think of the sacrifices that were made by our ancestors in previous war, in the great Napoleonic wars, for instance; and I say that any sacrifice we may be called upon to bear in reference to the South African war is a mere flea-bite compared with what our ancestors were subjected to in order to maintain their position. But what conclusion did I draw from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's rather gloomy disquisition? I remember my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the occasion of the late Budget, also dealt with the subject, perhaps a little more hopefully, but he did lay it down as an essential part of the future financial policy of the country that a serious effort should be made largely to reduce the Debt, and especially to reduce the floating debt; and I say authoritatively that if it had fallen to my right hon. friend to deal with his own surplus he would have made a much larger reduction than the right hon. Gentleman opposite proposes. And after all we have heard about the importance of restoring the finances of the country, to conclude with a miserable, paltry subscription of £500,000 a year towards the Sinking Fund seems to me to be a most inadequate conclusion. It is true the right hon. Gentleman played with the figures in a way that might confuse any House less experienced in fiscal matters than the present. He talked about making up £1,000,000 as additional contribution to the Sinking Fund. A million? £500,000 is all that comes in any sense from taxation. The other £500,000 is the repayment of Debt by the Chinese Government as the indemnity for the massacres and Boxer disturbances which cost us at the time several millions of money. And as my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer said, with the universal consent of the last House, that money, which we anticipated for this year, is ear-marked, and must of necessity go—no Chancellor of the Exchequer could think of doing otherwise that allowing it to go—to the reduction of the particular debt against which it is set as an indemnity. I say it is rather playing with terms, therefore, to introduce that as if it was a sacrifice we were making.

Mr. ASQUITH: I never said it was a sacrifice we were making.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It is perfectly clear that the only sacrifice which the Committee is called upon to make on behalf of the taxpayer is to give up £500,000 of the anticipated surplus to the reduction of the Debt. But the condition of affairs is not nearly as bad as the right hon. Gentleman represented it, or else he has not had the courage to follow his convictions and to make the contribution towards the reduction of the Debt which he ought to have made. But we all know perfectly well he wanted money to meet, as far as he could, the claims made upon him, and to distribute, as much as he could amongst these several claims. As to the selection he has made: he has abolished the coal duty. I believe I am right in saying that my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer indicated his opinion that the coal duty was one of the first imposts which ought to go in any redistribution of taxation. [Cries of "When?"] He said it in a speech to a deputation from the coal-owning interests, which waited upon him during his term of office. In the regrettable absence of my right hon. friend I cannot say what were the reasons which brought him to that conclusion. However, as I say, when we come to the details of the policy of the Budget we find that we are engaged in considering a policy which in its main principles is the policy of the late Government. But I should like to know very much, especially after the criticisms of the hon. Member for Rotherham, what is the view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the incidence of the coal tax. Does it fall, in his opinion, upon the consumer in Germany, or does it fall upon the producer in this country? I rather gather from the language which the right hon. Gentleman used that, in his opinion, it falls upon the producer in this country, because he represented that owing to the tax the producer in this country has been put to a disadvantage as compared with the producer in Germany, and accordingly his object in remitting the tax is to benefit at the same time the producer in this country by increasing the demand for his product and the consumer in foreign countries by giving him his coal at a lower price.

Mr. ASQUITH: I do not care about the consumer in foreign countries at all.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Oh, I am so glad to hear that. Again, may I call the Committee to witness, this is our policy? Nothing could have given me greater pleasure than that statement of the right hon. Gentleman. I am quite sure that my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, had he been here, would have entirely shared the feeling of the right hon. Gentleman; and if he had attempted to deal with this tax it would also have been in order to benefit the producer in this country. Of course, I hope the abolition of the tax will inure not merely to the benefit of the coal-owners—who usually are not objects of very great compassion in cases of this kind—but to the benefit of the working people who are employed in the mines. Then if it is the case that this export tax is paid by the producer, why, in the circumstances, cannot the right hon. Gentleman conceive of a case in which an import tax upon coal or upon corn should not also be paid by the producer? The hon. Member for Rotherham, who has just sat down, feels that this is a very reasonable inquiry to make, and he thinks he has got a very satisfactory and complete answer to it. The hon. Gentleman says that in the case of the export duty on coal it is the producer who pays, because the consumer has a choice in the matter; that is, instead of paying more for his coal by buying from this country, he buys from Germany. Very well. Then why does not the same thing result if you put an import duty on corn? The hon. Gentleman replies, "Oh, in that case the consumer has no choice." But, pardon me, in that case the consumer would have two choices, which, together at any rate, ought to be sufficient to enable him to make a selection. In the first place, he would have the choice of the home-grown article, and, secondly, he would have the choice of the corn coming from those parts of the British Empire which would not be subject to the duty.

*Sir WILLIAM HOLLAND: Both are not nearly sufficient.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is a matter of opinion. Then the right hon. Gentleman proposes to reduce the tea duty. I confess that here I part company from him. I agree with him that probably there is no tax which more deserves attention than the tea duty. Indeed, the only exception I would be inclined to make is the tobacco duty. Undoubtedly the tax upon tobacco is a most unfair one in that sense, that the charge upon high priced tobacco bears no proportion at all to the charge upon low priced tobacco. Therefore, it is a choice as between tobacco and tea. But tea, at all events—first, because of the amount of the duty in proportion to the value of the article, and, secondly, because of the large consumption in this country—is an article which undoubtedly deserves the consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Still, I would ask, why does he choose tea? What reason does he give for making a reduction which will go wholly into the pockets of hon. Gentlemen inside and outside the Committee who act as retailers and wholesale dealers in tea? [Ministerial cries of "Oh"] That is my opinion, and I think I have as good a right to express it as any hon. Gentleman here has to argue his case. In my opinion, the reduction of one penny on a pound of tea will not go into the pockets of the working classes. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself evidently thinks there is some weakness in his position, because he was careful to tell us that, if the reduction did not go into the pockets of the working classes in the shape of a diminution in the price of their tea, they would get the benefit of it in the way of quality. I have heard that argument before from the retailers of tea; but I ask the working classes to recognise that the Committee desires to give them a reduction of a penny in the pound on their tea and to take care that they get it, and not to to be misled by any allegation that the quality of their tea is so much better. But to my mind, however, the smallness of the reduction is an objection to dealing with tea. If you could not take off at least 2d. on the pound, it would have been much better to leave it alone. It is the old story with the right hon. Gentleman. He finds it difficult to keep King Charles' head out of his memorial, and accordingly the fiscal question comes in even in the course of his Budget speech. I did not say that fiscal questions come in. Of course they could not be excluded. What I did say was—the fiscal question comes in. It comes into the duty on tea in this way. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded to explain that one of the advantages in favour of selecting tea was that it showed the people of this country that a reduction could be made in tea without the imposition of a corresponding tax on something else. But allow me to say this. If we were to go into the details of the question it could be shown that it was not a miserable penny on tea that would be taken off, but 4d. off tea, something like half the duty on sugar, and a large reduction also in the cost of tobacco. Therefore the right hon. Gentleman did not strengthen his case by the use of two incompatible propositions. To take 1d. off tea is a good thing, but it is not to be compared to changes which would involve vast reductions in the cost of articles of consumption besides other benefits of immense importance.

So far I have dealt with the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman. But there is one minor matter upon which I must ask for some further information. The right hon. Gentleman proposes to upset the conclusions of his predecessors in office with regard to the duty on tobacco, or, rather, not so much as to upset those conclusions as to alter and reduce the difference between strip and leaf tobacco from 3d. to ½d. The right hon. Gentleman has given no reason whatever for the change, which he says will make no difference to the revenue, based upon the working of the proposals of his predecessor. My right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer gave two reasons for his alteration in the taxation on tobacco as between strip and leaf. He said, in the first place, that the manufactured article ought to be more highly taxed than the raw material, in order to maintain the proportion between raw material and the manufactured article; and secondly, by taxing the manufactured article the manufacture would be kept in this country, and thereby a large number of people would obtain employment who, otherwise, would lose that source of work. The right hon. Gentleman said just now that he did not care about the foreign consumer. I hope he will admit that he does care about the British producer, and especially about the industrial classes who are employed in production. I am assured that the change in the taxation between strip and leaf made by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer has had the two effects which my right hon. friend contemplated. It established an equality as between the manufactured article and raw material, and it added very largely to employment in the trade. In these circumstances I should like to know what is the supreme reason which induced the right hon. Gentleman to make this change in the case of tobacco, for I must assume that he has some good reason which he has not yet disclosed rather than the desire to prove his originality by altering the policy of his predecessor. I hope, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman will tell us why, agreeing as he does that there ought to be some difference between strip and leaf, he has selected a halfpenny as against threepence as the precise sum by which to establish the true proportion.

The effect of all these changes is that the surplus at the disposal of the right hon. Gentleman is gone, and he has nothing to give to income-tax payers except a Commission. There, I think, we come to an important difference between our policy and the policy of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman says that the income-tax at a shilling in the pound in time of peace is a most unfortunate position. Of course it is. I say that when you talk of the financial credit of this country, to my mind a moderate income-tax which could largely be increased in time of war is of infinitely greater importance to us as a resource in a serious national emergency than even a considerable reduction in the Debt. I have always agreed with those financiers who called the income-tax the sheet anchor of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in time of war. But in order that we may without hesitation make the greatest demands upon it—and remember that we have not seen the greatest demands upon it which would be called for in the case of a really great and serious war—but in order to justify the call which would be made upon it in such an emergency it certainly ought not to exceed a very moderate sum in time of peace, and therefore I do not at all like this proposal to postpone still further the consideration of the demand made by the ordinary income-tax payer for relief. Of course some people when they talk of the income-tax payer have in view only the large capitalist, who is supposed to be able to pay anything. In my opinion, of all classes of income-tax payers there are none so hardly treated by the tax as the small income-tax payers. In my opinion it is very hard upon persons of moderate incomes that they should pay their full proportion of indirect taxation while at the same time they pay their very heavy direct taxation. I think if the right hon. Gentleman was not in a position to give them relief this year, it would have been better if he had held back instead of exciting expectations until he was in a better position, and he should not have given doles to classes, as he has undoubtedly done, with the not unnatural object of gaining more popularity for an otherwise very undistinguished Budget. The right hon. Gentleman tells us that in the current year he expects good trade and an increase of income. I have every hope, if we keep out of war, that the income of the country may automatically increase. But a Chancellor of the Exchequer, prudently dealing with the finances of the country, must not, even if he is the Chancellor of the Exchequer of a Radical Government, rely absolutely and certainly on being able to keep out of war. What has happened? If in any part of the world there was any disturbance during the ten or twenty years the Unionists have been in power, remember it has always been attributed to some deliberate wickedness on our part. Of course there could not have been a war if a Radical Government had been in power! I observe there are still some gentlemen who hug that delusion. How long will you entertain it? How long with your peace at any price Government are you going to keep out of war? What have we seen already? In four months you have had a punitive expedition in Nigeria. In four months you have had a disturbance in Natal [Several HON. MEMBERS: Your fault], the seriousness of which we all feel. While I hope and honestly believe that there is no reason at the present moment for grave anxiety, yet we know that there is no prophet yet born who can say positively that this country may not be led into trouble in connection with the unrest in Natal. Of course I do not impute any blame to the Government. When Lord Lansdowne went out of office there was not a cloud on the horizon. The late wicked Government, therefore, left, in appearance at any rate, the prospect of absolute peace to its successors. But already in four months, besides the two matters to which I have referred, you have this difficulty in Egypt, as to which I will only say that there is no one here who will dare to predict the ultimate outcome. In these circumstances it is not quite safe to rely, even with a Radical Government in power, upon that continued increase of prosperity which alone justifies sanguine expectations for the future. The right hon. Gentleman has been four months at the Treasury, and he has seen nothing to justify him in making any substantial change in the expenditure of the country. It may be that four months more will give him the information which would justify him in making reductions. That also will depend a good deal on the state of Europe and of the world. There is only one thing certain—and it is quite as certain under a Radical Government as under a Unionist Government—and that is demands for more expenditure. This new Parliament has been here for only three months, and what has happened already? The vast majority of the House has indicated its willingness to increase the wages of all the industrial portion of the Civil Service of the Crown. More money is wanted for education. There is an item of something like a million—and this, I expect, will be vastly increased before we are done with it—for the endowment of a new religion. You have voted in favour of a Resolution to give effect to which would involve an expenditure of £300,000 for the payment of Members of Parliament. It means a great deal more than that, because, whether we intend it or not, the vote carries undoubtedly similar salaries to Members of the other House of Parliament, who stand quite as much in need of it as Members of this House; and, therefore, you must count on a sum to come from the Chancellor of between a half and three-quarters of a million. You have taken, with a great flourish of trumpets, a penny off the tea duty. Oh, yes; but not all this year. You have allowed a great part of that to fall on the Budget of next year. So with the coal duty. The coal duty also is not to come on the Budget of this year, but is to fall on the Budget of next year; and, therefore, while this Budget is undoubtedly a humdrum and commonplace Budget, I believe, looking to the future, it will be found to be a very improvident one.

MR. ASQUITH: I shall not attempt to follow the right hon. Gentleman in that remarkable passage in the concluding part of his speech in which, with such patriotic forethought, he foreshadowed possible, if not probable, disturbances, and even breaches of the peace, which might be expected to result from the advent of a Radical Government to power. He actually blames me for not having made provision in this Budget against contingencies such as that. I shall not follow the right hon. Gentleman's example by attempting to draw invidious distinctions in this respect between one Government and another. The right hon. Gentleman said—why, I do not know—that when Lord Lansdowne left office there was not a cloud on the horizon. Has he forgotten that when Lord Lansdowne left office—I am not blaming him——

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I was not blaming you.

Mr. ASQUITH: Lord Lansdowne was a most admirable Foreign Minister — there was one most embarrassing European difficulty which was to be confronted — the difficulty of Morocco, which occupied the Conference at Algeciras for the best part of three months, and the emergence of Europe from which was due, in no small degree, to the tact and ability with which my right hon. friend the Foreign Secretary conducted the negotiations? But what was the object of introducing topics like that into the discussion of the Budget, which certainly does not give any fair occasion for it? The right hon. Gentleman has told the Committee, I think three times, that this was a very commonplace Budget—so commonplace, he seemed to think, that it might almost have been framed by the late Government. I quite agree. It is a commonplace Budget. It has no pretension to be anything else. For reasons which I thought I explained, in the circumstances in which we found ourselves, it could not be otherwise. The right hon. Gentleman says—Why do you pretend that you are bound by the Estimates of your predecessors? I have never been more surprised in the course of my experience than at that part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. He knows perfectly well how and when Estimates are framed. The Estimates for the spending departments are framed in the autumn. When we came into office in the middle of December they were practically all ready. The late Government even took the precaution, in view of the possible advent of a general election, to do a thing which, I believe, has never been done before—namely, to publish the Navy Estimates as an electioneering tract to show what wonderful economists they were; and by a curious want of consistency and even-handedness they neglected to publish the Army Estimates, which, as the Committee knows, in the form in which my right hon. friend found them, showed a very considerable increase. Now is it not absurd to say that Estimates framed under these conditions, when the members of the Government were occupied during the great part of January in trying to keep or win seats at the general election, and when the Estimates had to be submitted in February—is it not absurd to say that either the heads of the spending departments or the Chancellor of the Exchequer had any real control in the matter? The Estimates are the Estimates of the late and not of the present Government. And remember we came into office before the general election and not after. I made I do not know how many speeches to my constituents and to electors in other parts of the country, and on behalf of the new Government I disclaimed all responsibility for these Estimates. We were elected, and the electors gave us their mandate on that understanding. The Estimates of this Government will be seen when they are presented to Parliament next year, and not before. I will not go into the somewhat audacious digression of the right hon. Gentleman about old-age pensions. He tells us, not for the first time, that he never promised old-age pensions. The last time that we had a little controversy across the Table about the subject the right hon. Gentleman interrupted me by declaring that he did not promise, but that he only proposed old-age pensions.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not accept that statement.

Mr. ASQUITH: I am afraid, however, that it is recorded in *Hansard*.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Quote it.

Mr. ASQUITH: The right hon. Gentleman said that he did not give a promise, but only made a proposal. I remember the statement because I also remember the answer that I gave to him in return. This view is corroborated by what the right hon. Gentleman said as to his most simple alternative suggestion, and the proposal or the proposals, I think, took the first place in the electioneering programme of the Unionist Government as far back as 1895. But there is not much relevance in that topic to the consideration of the Budget on which we are ostensibly engaged. I come to the right hon. Gentleman's specific criticisms on what I have proposed. First of all as to the debt whose increase in the main, it is alleged, is due to the war. Yes, but not by any means entirely. The capital liabilities, which have risen in ten years from £4,000,000 to £45,000,000, have little or nothing to do with the war. Here I may interpose two or three observations in reply to the late Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to think that I have laid down in the Estimates as a proposition that in no conceivable circumstances would the present Government regard the raising of money by loan for works of a permanent character, of a naval or military character, as justifiable. I did not say so. I guarded myself from saying so. On the contrary, I said that cases must and would occur in the history of all countries which would make it necessary to resort to temporary borrowing for works of a permanent character. But I also said that the system of the late Government was a system so full of abuses that it was time it was brought to a final close, and that we intended to bring it to a final close at the earliest possible moment. The right hon. Gentleman says that these naval and military loans were necessary for great Imperial purposes. I have two observations to make about that. In the first place, a not inconsiderable proportion of the works appearing in the schedule and which have been constructed and erected by borrowed money are works which are now, by the admission of all responsible strategists who are alive to the real military and naval necessities of the Empire, obsolete, worthless, and wasteful. In every direction you will find evidence of that wasteful policy. Not only is that the case, not only were the works properly described, if they had been well conceived, as works of a permanent character erected by borrowing, but, what I conceive to be still worse, works which have no claim whatsoever to be so regarded as belonging to this category, and the cost of which in no circumstances were defrayed out of the Estimates of the year, were so treated. I have here an instructive Return which will illustrate the point. It was presented to Parliament in 1903, and it is a statement showing the allotment of £170,000 provided in the military works loans for the purpose of assisting the Volunteers in connection with the expenditure on rifle ranges. This is what it says—

> "Grants to Volunteer corps in aid of expenditure on rifle ranges:—1st Ayr and Galloway, £4; 2nd Volunteer Battalion Royal West Surrey Regiment, £6."

And there are other items of the same sort. These sums were borrowed, and the repayment with interest was spread over a period of thirty years, because it was said that there was no other way so economical to discharge your Imperial responsibility.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I never suggested that such a use of borrowed money is an economical way of dealing with it. I said that if you wanted to construct great works economically you should construct them rapidly, but the difficulty of producing the large expenditure out of the Votes was such as to make it a better plan to spread the expenditure over a large number of years. I was referring to expenditure on land and permanent works.

MR. ASQUITH: The right hon. Gentleman has laid down a principle in favour of which a good deal might be said. But I here produce a loan raised by the right hon. Gentleman's own Government under the very Act we are now considering, figures presented to Parliament in 1903, which shows that however excellent may be the principles in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman, in point of fact these things will inevitably happen when you resort to this policy of borrowing for works that are to be carried on. I have also a quotation from a speech of the right hon. Gentleman which causes me surprise that he should have uttered the criticism of this afternoon. As late as July 19th, 1905, the late Prime Minister assured an hon. Member and the Committee—

> "Of the desire and intention of the Government to close up this system at the earliest opportunity, and to bring any additional expenditure which might be necessary either in connexion with the works mentioned in the Bill or works which might be possibly required in future as far as possible in the ordinary Naval Vote, or, in other words, in Vote 10."

What more have I said?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought that the right hon. Gentleman laid down the proposition that he was never going to borrow. My argument is that when you have to deal with great constructive works which may be necessary you cannot follow the policy of carrying them on out of revenue.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham) said that the right hon. Gentleman had been quoting from a speech which he delivered.

MR. ASQUITH: I was premature, and I am afraid the hon. Member is right. But I will quote from the late Prime Minister himself. ["Oh, oh!"] I am sorry if I have attributed to the right hon. Gentleman what was said by one of his colleagues. The right hon. Gentleman, in one of his speeches, indicated that it was the intention of the late Government to abandon the loan system for the normal method of placing sums on the Votes, that the situation at the time justified the loan system coming to an end, and therefore the Government proposed to revert to the system of defraying the expenditure from the annual revenue.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

MR. ASQUITH: Then we are in agreement. The late Prime Minister made an appeal to me on the subject of Ireland. The answer that I was about to give to that appeal has been given by the hon. Member for East Mayo. I was careful, rightly careful, not to commit myself to any precise statement as to the method in which the Government proposes to deal with the financial relations between the two countries; and I do not propose to be drawn into doing anything more than to repeat what I said. The matter is receiving, and will continue to receive, on the part of the Chief Secretary and myself, the most careful consideration, and I hope to be in a position to make a more definite statement next year. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham spoke about the war debt, and he sneers at the paltry contribution of half a million towards increasing the Sinking Fund. It may be paltry, but let us see what we are doing this year in respect of the Sinking Fund. We have inherited a large surplus of £3,500,000. We are able to set aside for the debt £9,000,000 or £12,500,000, and, in addition, I propose to give £500,000 out of the Sinking Fund, taking advantage for the first time of the China indemnity to the extent of another £500,000. The result is that I shall apply this year in reduction of the dead-weight debt £13,500,000, which is largely in excess of any sum hitherto applied to that purpose in the financial history of the country. I do not think that, in the circumstances of the year, I was justified in demanding from the taxpayer a greater sacrifice. At one time I thought of doing so; but in the result, when I added up the sums and looked at the impression they would make on the outstanding debt, I came to the conclusion that £500,000 was as large a sum as I was justified in setting aside. I am perfectly content to stand by it.

Then the right hon. Gentleman's position with reference to the coal tax is one which I do not profess to understand. He seems to think that the tax would have been repealed by my predecessor if he had remained in office. But he took the opportunity of putting a question which I am glad to have the opportunity of answering, as to the incidence of an export duty like that of the coal tax, compared with the incidence of an import duty on, say, foreign corn. He says, "You admit by your argument and action that the export duty on coal falls upon the British producer; otherwise you would not say that it was in the interest of the trade to remove it. Why, then, do you not make a corresponding admission with regard to an import duty which may be paid here on corn produced abroad?" The question is not very difficult to answer; but I will answer it if I may in a couple of sentences. An export duty like that on coal is put on at the port of exit, whence the commodity starts on its voyage to the foreign market. It is only, therefore, the supply which is sent out of the country which puts the duty on the price. The rest of the supply is not taxed. Therefore, if a sufficient supply can be got from countries which do not put on that duty, it is evident that the foreign market can so supply itself. Therefore, if the producer of the country which puts on this export duty is to compete in the foreign market, he must sell his coal at his competitors' price and pay the duty himself. Now, an import duty is put on at the entrance to the market, and not at the port of exit. Suppose, as would be the case under the right hon. Gentleman's scheme, the whole supply from foreign countries were to be subject to an import duty. It follows that, unless the untaxed supply—that is to say, the home-grown supply *plus* the preferred supply—is sufficient, as it is not, to satisfy the wants of the market, the foreign corn must come in; and as there is only one price for the same article in the same market, the whole price in that market will be the price of the foreign corn. I apologise to the House for this digression into the elements of economic science, which, as the right hon. Gentleman says, it is difficult to exclude altogether even when discussing the Budget.

One word, and only one word, on the subject of tea. The right hon. Gentleman says that in his opinion this 1d. which I am remitting will go into the pockets of the producers and middlemen. I do not think it will. I can assure the Committee that when I found that my resources were not sufficient to reduce the tax by 2d., as I should have liked to do, the first question I asked of my expert advisers—and I have access to the advice of the highest possible authorities—was, will this go to the consumer or not? They said that it would, and for reasons some of which I gave yesterday. First, the tax on tea is so enormous in proportion to the value of the article—90 per cent.—that when you reduce it, as you do here, by considerably over 10 per cent. you are making such a substantial reduction in the total cost that the force of competition must compel the producer to give the larger part of the benefit to the consumer. Secondly, while it is perfectly true that a small reduction of duty in the case of many commodities, like tobacco, for instance, may be intercepted or long delayed in the various intermediate operations between the importation of the raw material and the retailing of the finished commodity, yet in the case of tea there are no such intermediate operations. It comes here in the form in which it is distributed, and nothing but the work of distribution remains to be accomplished; and for that reason I am advised that the whole of this reduction of duty will benefit the consumer, and also, indirectly, the British producers in India and Ceylon, who have been so largely handicapped by this duty in the past.

As to tobacco, the right hon. Gentleman asks me why I change the existing scale. Again, the answer is a simple one. I change the scale first of all because it is cutting off the supply of strips. Next, because it is not going to bring in any revenue to the Exchequer. It is true that the effect of the scale which my predecessor devised led to the growth of a small protected industry in this country—the industry of stripping. But I have chosen a halfpenny as the difference between strips and leaf because it will bring them on a level, and will make all the allowance that can fairly be made for the manufacture of the leaf, for the small processes of handling, and for the extra weight of the moisture and sand in the leaf. Without desiring in any degree to curtail the discussion, I hope the House will now consent to give us the Resolution.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, that there shall be charged, on and after the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and six, until the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and seven, in lieu of the duty now payable on tea, the following Customs import duty on tea (that is to say):—

Tea - - - the pound Five pence.

—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

[WAYS AND MEANS [30TH APRIL]—REPORT.]

[MR. EMMOTT, the Deputy Speaker, in the chair.]

Resolution reported.

ALTERATION OF DUTY ON STRIPPED TOBACCO AND OF DRAWBACKS ON TOBACCO.

1. "That for the increase of three pence per pound payable on stripped tobacco under section two of The Finance Act, 1904, there shall, as from the first day of May, nineteen hundred and six, be submitted an increase of one halfpenny per pound; and that the drawbacks allowed by the same Act on tobacco of the following description shall, as from the twenty-first day of May, nineteen hundred and six, be reduced by the substitution for the ordinary rate set out in the Table of Rates of Drawback

in the schedule to the said Act of the rate following (that is to say):—

In the case of cigars	the lb.	3	1
,, cigarettes	,,	3	0
,, cut, roll, cake, or other manufactured tobacco	,,	2	11
In the case of snuff, not being offal snuff	,,	2	10."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

2. "That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by sections two, three, four, and five of The Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by section five of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and seven."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTIES ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

3. "That the additional Excise duties on beer and spirits imposed by sections six and seven of the Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and seven."

PERMANENT ANNUAL CHARGE.

4. "That the permanent annual charge for the National Debt for the current financial year be twenty-eight and a-half instead of twenty-eight million pounds."

CHINA INDEMNITY.

5 "That it is expedient to authorise the application in like manner as the new sinking fund is applied of any sums paid into the Exchequer on account of the China Indemnity."

INCOME TAX.

6. "That Income Tax shall be charged, for the year beginning the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred and six, at the rate of one shilling in the pound."

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

7. "That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the National Debt, Customs, and Inland Revenue."

Resolutions read a second time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution."

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said that he found that one-tenth of a penny would represent the real difference between strips and leaf, and therefore the new differentiation would still give some small protection to the stripping industry. It was also a great temptation to the manufacturer to use stalks in the cheaper sorts of tobacco. It would have been better to meet the case by a larger drawback instead of by a differential duty, so as to induce manufacturers not to use stalks at all.

Question put, and agreed to.

Remaining Resolutions agreed to; Bill ordered to be brought in by the Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. McKenna.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (No. 2) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2:—

"In page 1, line 7, to leave out the words 'if otherwise qualified.'" — (*Mr. William Rutherford.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'if otherwise qualified' stand part of the clause."

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said that the reason why this Amendment was pressed when the Bill was last before the Committee was that there could be only two kinds of qualification for a Justice of the Peace—the possession of estate and residence. The Committee, by adopting Clause 1, had abolished the qualification by estate; and inasmuch as the wording of Clause 2 dealt with the question of residence it was obvious that there could not be any kind of qualification to which the words "if otherwise qualified" could be said to refer. To leave these words in the clause would only lead to confusion; and in the interests of perspicacity he thought the Amendment should be accepted.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. Robson, South Shields) said that Clause 1 abrogated the qualification by estate, and Clause 2 stated that a man might be qualified by residence in the county or within seven miles of the county. The words "if otherwise qualified" were necessary.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he desired, after that explanation, to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*Mr. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston) said that in the Municipal Corporations Act there were enabling words which qualified a man as Justice of the Peace for a borough who occupied a house or property in the borough. Why should not these words be applied to a county? As they were enlarging the field of choice of Justices in counties by allowing them to reside seven miles out of the county, he thought it desirable that they should be put on the same footing in this respect also as in the boroughs. He moved to insert at end of Clause 2, line 10, the words—

> "Or occupy a house or other property in the county."

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 1, line 10, after the word 'thereof,' to add the words 'or occupies a house or other property in the county.'"—(*Mr. Cave.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir WILLIAM ROBSON said he did not think the Amendment was of much importance one way or the other; but it was undesirable to enlarge the scope of the clause as suggested. If a gentleman occupied a residence he should be qualified, but he was of opinion that it was not desirable to introduce a temporary residence as a qualification.

Sir H. AUBREY-FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes) said that he had taken a great interest in this Bill, and he believed that it would be improved if the Solicitor-General accepted the Amendment.

Mr. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe) said that the Amendment would raise another property qualification, and he hoped the Solicitor-General would not accept it.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 44; Noes, 305. (Division List No. 56.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn. Sir Alex. F
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (City Lond.
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Maylebone, E.)
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Duncan, Robert (Lana'k, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm's
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Percy, Earl
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Valentia, Viscount
Younger, George

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher and Mr. Cave.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)

Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,John Williams(Devonp't
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black,Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire,N.E.
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsay)
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner,J. F. L.(Lancs.,Leigh)
Bryce,Rt.Hn.James (Aberdeen
Bryce,J.A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.HnRichard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,E. Grins'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies,David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dickinson,W.H.(St.Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dillon, John
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.

Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis, J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert,Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope,John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex,Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Lynch, H. B.

Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah(Down, S.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall(Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N. (Doncas'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James(Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards,T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson,Sir G.Scott(Bradf'd

Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, W. Dudley (Southamptn
Wardle, George J.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) objected to the general application of the system under which gentlemen residing seven miles from the county might be appointed. He knew that there were many cases in which it was necessary to take that step to secure a quorum, but he thought the general application of the principle was a mistake. He thought the Court of Quarter Sessions would rather have justice administered by gentlemen who resided in the county and knew the needs of the neighbourhood than by people who resided in another county and were brought from seven miles off. Why should the peaceful folk of Somersetshire have men brought in who were ignorant of their customs and, in many cases, of their language? A man who resided in Rutland, who was appointed a magistrate, would be qualified to serve in the four neighbouring counties. That gentleman might have strong views on the game laws either in favour of or against the poacher; he might have strong views on the licensing question either in favour of or against the licensed houses. It seemed to him against the principle of any Radical Government to put all these discretionary powers in the hands of one man. It also seemed rather curious that on the eve of the day upon which the Plural Voting Bill, which included, he apprehended, the principle of one man one vote, was to be introduced they should be discussing the principle of a man who could only vote in one county in an election being able to exercise his magisterial functions not in one but in four counties. It was on these grounds that he opposed the clause.

*SIR W. ROBSON said the right hon. Gentleman was apparently oblivious of the fact that the vote just given would enable a gentleman to be a magistrate in any county. The reason for this seven mile-limit was a very practical and proper one. It was this: there were many districts, especially industrial districts, where persons qualified to act as magistrates had large interests in a particular district but had their residences outside that district, and it was thought that the same rule should apply to them as that which already applied in the case of boroughs.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he joined his right hon. friend in his opposition to this clause. The Committee had already heard what the effect of it would be in a small county. The effect was to give a special qualification to a man to be appointed a magistrate who resided, not in the county in which his magisterial duties were exercised, but seven miles outside the borders of that county. In a large county the effect would be that any man who resided on the strip of land seven miles wide adjoining another county would be eligible for election to the magistracy of that other county. One curious result of the clause would be that whereas if a man resided eight miles from the border he would be eligible to serve as a magistrate in only one county, if he resided on that strip of land fourteen miles wide, seven miles each side of the border, he would have a double qualification. He thought there should only be one qualification. They should either abolish the qualification and put everyone on an equality, or, if that could not be done, and there must be a residential qualification, they should take care that no one had more than one residential qualification. It was quite clear that this clause was a mistake. It established privileges and gave rights to individuals who lived in an arbitrarily selected territory and was for that reason highly objectionable. Therefore he hoped the Government would see their way to omit it from the Bill.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 289; Noes, 35. (Division List No. 57.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams(Devonp't
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H.(Essex,Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black,Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton,T.D.(Derbyshire, N.E.)
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner,J. F. L. (Lancs.,Leigh)
Bryce,Rt.Hn.James (Aberdeen
Bryce,J..A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cave, George
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex, E.Grins'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies,David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dickinson,W.H.(St.Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dillon, John
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hooper, A. G.
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)

Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Donc'r)
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomson
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, Davin James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Macknezie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn Sir Alex. F.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Watson Rutherford and Sir William Bull.

Clause 3:—

*MR. CAVE thought they ought to have the words "if qualified" after the word "solicitor." The Solicitor-General was very careful indeed to have such words in Clause 2, but as Clause 3 read now a solicitor might be appointed although not qualified at all. He certainly thought they should be just as careful here as in the other case, and he therefore moved that the words "if qualified" be added after the word "solicitor."

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 11, after the word 'solicitor' to insert the words 'if qualified.'"—(*Mr. Cave.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'if qualified' be there inserted."

SIR W. ROBSON said the words were quite unnecessary as the solicitor must be qualified.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) said he could not understand why, if the words were necessary in Clause 2, they were not necessary in Clause 3. After all a person was not substantially different from a solicitor, and if there was a danger in the one case of an alien being appointed, why not also in the case of a solicitor?

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) said the Amendment would make the clause perfectly clear that a solicitor could not be appointed unless he were qualified.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he could not support the Amendment. He was a solicitor himself, and he took it that if this clause became law he or any other solicitor might be appointed a justice of the peace for any county. The questions of qualification by estate or residence would not arise. It would be sufficient if he were a solicitor. The result of passing this clause in its present comprehensive form would be that any solicitor practising in London could be appointed a justice of the peace for Devonshire, or any other county. He did not know whether that was the intention of the Government, but on behalf of the profession to which he belonged he heartily welcomed this tardy measure of justice, and he recognised that it was an attempt on the part of the Government to make up for the injustice to which the profession had been subjected for so many years.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N. W.) thought that the Amendment as it stood might give rise to some confusion. He would suggest that the words "if otherwise qualified" should be substituted. That would put the two clauses on all fours, and solicitors would not be placed on a completely different plane from all other members of the community.

MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton) said it was perfectly clear that the words "otherwise qualified" in Clause 2 were put there only for the purpose of keeping alive certain existing disabilities.

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

CORK CITY RAILWAYS AND WORKS BILL. (BY ORDER.)

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. J. J. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.) explained that the measure was brought in for the purpose of constructing a new link line across the city to join up the existing railway. There were three Bills to promote this object. The Bill to which he would call the attention of the House was promoted by the Fishguard and Rosslare Railway Company. This Company intended to provide a new and competitive through route with the Great Southern & Western Railway to Cork and Dublin, and also with the same company to Cork and London and the South of England. A necessary part of that through route was that a line should be constructed from Cork to Dunkettle and Fermoy. The Treasury undertook to put at the disposal of the Hybrid Committee the sum of £93,000, which was a mortgage on the County of Waterford Railway, that sum having been required in addition to the original capital of £280,000. The capital was insufficient to complete the construction, and the Irish Board of Works advanced £93,000 by way of mortgage. That line was acquired by the Fishguard and Rosslare Railway, and it was forty-three miles long. In order to complete the through route it was laid down that a line should be constructed from Fermoy to Cork. In 1873 through the Grand Jury it was agreed that the ratepayers of the county of Waterford should be taxed to the extent of 5 per cent. on the original capital, representing £14,000 a year, in order to secure the construction of the railway. In 1898 an offer was made to wipe out the whole guarantee of £14,000 a year payable by the ratepayers of Waterford upon the Treasury agreeing to remit their mortgage of £93,000 upon the railway. But the hybrid Committee would not accept this offer, which was made by the promoters of the Bill, and they suggested that the Cork and Fermoy Company should complete the route with a view to securing competition with the Southern and Western Railway, and the Waterford ratepayers were offered relief to the extent of £7,000 a year. The position now was that the company which undertook to construct the Cork and Fermoy direct line had failed to carry out its obligations and, therefore, the county of Waterford ratepayers claimed the benefit of that money in justice to the people of the county of Waterford who had made such enormous sacrifices for their railway. Last year a Bill was brought in for the construction of these lines in Cork City, and he believed it was thrown out by the Committee because it was promoted by a private syndicate. The Cork City Council were willing to guarantee 4 per cent., and the Treasury at that time agreed, in case they were satisfied with the financial part of the scheme, to accept it, but when they came to investigate it for themselves the Treasury were not satisfied with the financial basis of the Bill.

On behalf of his constituency in the county of Waterford who had been paying an average rate of 11¼d. in the £ on the entire valuation of the county, and also on behalf of the city of Waterford, which had been paying £1,600 a year in respect of the guarantee, he strongly protested against any part of this money being used for constructing link lines or bridges across the Lee so long as there was any possibility of its being used for the purpose of making a substitute for the Cork direct line. Last year it was agreed that a sum of £33,000 of the entire sum of £93,000 should be allocated towards buying out the old toll bridge at Waterford; and as representing the ratepayers and the county of Waterford, he had no objection to that, because the city of Waterford ratepayers during the same period had been giving the £1,600 a year to which he had referred. On the contrary, he approved of that decision of the Treasury. The Bill that came before the House last year was thrown out because the Committee decided that they would not be a party to enabling the Great Western Company to evade their obligations of 1898. This was not the first attempt to evade those obligations. The position remained the same to-day, and these companies, the Great Southern and Western and the Great Western, ought not to be allowed to stand behind a Bill of this kind, as the promoters said they did stand behind it. They attempted in 1901 to evade their obligations. In that year they approached the Secretary of the Treasury, and it was practically arranged that money should be given to the Great Western Company for the building of this line. The whole Irish representation got up and protested indignantly against that course, and the Leader of the House at the time, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London, would not allow the arrangement, which had almost been completed, to be carried into effect. The right hon. Gentleman declared that the House ought not to permit obligations which should be regarded as sacred to be evaded two or three years after the obligations were undertaken. When the question of allocation came on, he hoped the House would determine that the money should be used for the benefit of the people who had made such enormous sacrifices in the past, and by whose means the people of Cork were able to talk to-day of this link line through the City. It was monstrous that these railway companies should ask the Treasury for a grant which should not be devoted to the work at all. This Cork City Railways Bill was really for the construction of a tramway. The proposal of the Cork and Waterford Railways Bill was for high level connecting links and swinging bridges across the Lee. The Committee to whom these Bills would go would no doubt be able to deal with these matters. He had only risen to enter his protest against the £60,000 being allocated directly or indirectly to the construction of these works in the city of Cork, and to claim on behalf of the ratepayers of Waterford that when the allocation came to be considered the House would determine that as far as possible the money should be used in the way he had indicated.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork) submitted that the discussion as to the share of the grant of £93,000 was irrelevant to the only question before the House, which was whether a Bill for bridging over the Lee and connecting the railway system with the rest of the country should be referred for consideration to the Committee. He thought he was entitled to call attention to the fact that the Bill did not in any way propose to appropriate this £93,000, or any proportion of the money. An arrangement was come to by the late Government and endorsed by the present Government for a certain allocation of this £93,000 between Cork and Waterford, and if that agreement was to be disturbed, obviously it was with the Treasury that the matter would have to be discussed hereafter, and the promoters of this Bill did not propose in any way to prejudge the question. They proposed that not only their own Bill, but the two alternative schemes, should all go together upon an equal footing before the Committee for consideration and investigation and evidence, and it would then be for the Treasury, by the light of the evidence given before the Committee, to say which of these projects was the more likely to fulfil the conditions under which this £60,000 was reserved for a satisfactory arrangement with Cork. He thought the hon. Member rather did an injustice to the very able Member for Waterford in thinking Waterford had done very badly in connection with these matters. On the contrary, he thought Waterford had fared remarkably well in comparison with Cork. In the first place the ratepayers of Waterford had been relieved of £7,000 a year, and the Waterford portion of the connection had been completed while the Cork connection had not been touched. In the next place Waterford was to have £33,000 for its bridge. He did not envy Waterford, but he was entitled to point out that that was a purpose not contemplated at all in the original scheme before the Committee, which merely stipulated for a footbridge. Waterford was in the splendid position of having an alternative route to England, and a free railway bridge, while the purpose for which this £90,000 was set apart had never been touched. These were all details which, of course, had much better be dealt with by the Committee who would go into the whole matter. It was absurd and irrelevant to ask the House to determine the matter just now. What they wanted was to give evidence in support of the claim which commanded the approval of the representatives of the corporation and of the Harbour Commissioners, and the support, not merely of the Great Southern and Western Railway, but of every railway which traded with the port. This Bill did not in the least interfere with any project for supplying an alternative route from the south of Ireland to Dublin. By bridging the Lee, it offered the best prospect of bringing into the railway connection a vast district in the west which was now absolutely cut off from the rest of the country. He might be allowed to say that this scheme would cost less than a half of the Links Railway and less than one-third of the other scheme, and that it proposed to lay down sidings to the deep water quays. The promoters of the Bill were perfectly willing that all three schemes should go before the Committee upstairs and be dealt with on their merits.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) said he could not allege that his constituents were interested in this matter to the same extent as the constituents of the hon. Member for West Waterford; but at the same time they were deeply interested in it. The hon. Member had stated that the railway companies had offered to relieve Waterford of the guarantee of £14,000 a year. The representatives of Waterford were anxious to close with that offer, but the late Mr. Hanbury, who was then Financial Secretary to the Treasury, stated that a competitive route would be of greater value to Waterford than the entire guarantee. He thought that the treatment which Waterford had received from the railway company had been downright disgraceful in regard to the competitive route from Cork to Fermoy. The present Leader of the Opposition on July 18th, 1901, was reported to have said—

> "There is no doubt that this company are pledged to construct the line from Cork to Fermoy, and the Treasury neither have the power, nor would they exercise it if they did possess it, of sanctioning any escape from that Parliamentary obligation."

And on the 23rd day of the same month the Leader of the Opposition said—

> "His opinion was that once a railway company came before a Committee of that House and got a Bill for value received it ought to carry out its obligations. It might be that the obligations ought not in the interest of Ireland to have been entered into. It might be that the money to be spent on this line had much better have been spent in carrying out other railway works in the south and west of Ireland. Upon that point he did not offer an opinion, though he inclined to the opinion that the money probably might be better spent. That did not, however, alter the fact that a bargain had been made in the most solemn manner before two Committees—a Committee of this House, and a Committee of the House of Lords—and that it was in consequence of that bargain that the railway company obtained from this House the privileges it now enjoyed. He thought they must distinguish that question from the question of expediency, and he did think that the railway company were bound to carry out the bargain into which they had entered."

These were the words of the right hon. Member for the City of London, when he was First Lord of the Treasury; and it was to be hoped that the present representative of the Treasury would adhere to these sound views, and would say that if this money was to be spent, it should be spent in providing an alternative route, and not in constructing tramways or railways in Cork. He hoped that the whole matter would be fairly thrashed out before a competent Committee upstairs, and he would seriously impress on the Gentleman in charge of the finances of the Treasury that Waterford had a prior claim to the Treasury grant.

*CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.) said he would not move the motion which stood in his name, that this Bill should be read a second time that day six months. While he did not wish to detain the House, he wished to explain his reasons for taking this course. The House had before it three separate and distinct Bills, and in regard to each of them it was asked that it should be taken in preference to the others. The importance of these Bills was very great, and it was on the ground of their importance that he urged that all three should go upstairs and be dealt with by a Committee. He wished to say that in taking this course he had done so with the assent of his hon. friends, and consequently, speaking on behalf of his Ulster colleagues, he wished to say that they desired, as far as they possibly could, to impress upon the House the necessity that the questions raised by the Bills should be carefully considered. Some of them dealt with overhead railways; in others the trains were to run along lines upon roads which were to be adequately protected, and some of them presented little outside schemes such as the seventeen mile road railway between Youghal and Cappagh. On occasions like this it was, in his judgment, the duty of the House to send all three Bills to the Committee. Let them be thrashed out, and then their united virtues might be embodied in a Bill which would satisfy the claims of Waterford, Cork, and Youghal. In withdrawing on behalf of the Ulster Party their objections to each of the Bills, he would like to say that they (the Ulster Unionist Party) met with very different treatment on a certain occasion recently and they hoped that the fair dealing which they now accorded to the South of Ireland in regard to these three most important railway Bills might on another occasion be extended to them. He had in common with other Members received circulars from the promoters of these various undertakings, and he would point out that although they naturally differed in substance, all of them respectfully asked that the Bill dealt with should be read a second time and referred to a Committee. In the case of the

Rathmines and Rathgar Bill, the Chairman of Ways and Means, it would be recollected, failed to instruct the House as to what should be done with private Bills of such a very contentious nature, namely, that the proper course was that of allowing them to go upstairs to be dealt with by a Committee. The Ulster Party in withdrawing their opposition did so in the interest of the eventual outcome of these measures, which he presumed would be the best of the three amended and improved. He hoped it would be considered that the minority to which he belonged were deserving of respect for the course which they had pursued.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.) said he had no intention of going into the respective merits of the three Bills so far as the railways terminating in the City of Cork were concerned. Neither had he the least desire to oppose any scheme calculated in any way whatever to benefit the people of West Cork, but he would point out that the only scheme which appeared to strike a through route between Cork and Dublin and thence to the South of England was that contained in the Cork and Waterford Bill. He considered that that Bill was deserving of the most support, and his Queenstown and Cork constituents were of the same opinion. The railway monopoly had been a source of great injury to the South of Ireland, and anything which could be done to break up the monopoly should, in his opinion, be eagerly adopted. In 1898 the Committee recognised the evils which railway monopoly inflicted upon the South of Ireland and recommended that a connection should be made between Cork and Fermoy, keeping the Rosslare route and preserving the connection between Dublin and the South of England. The Great Southern and Western gave a pledge that they would make this connection, in consideration of a grant of £93,000 from the Treasury, but they broke their pledge and these were the companies who would be placed in control of the railway system of Ireland, if nothing was now done beyond connecting the railways which terminated in the City of Cork. It was proposed, by the scheme contained in the Cork and Waterford Bill, to form an independent company, to construct a link between Cappagh and Youghal, and thus carry out the intention of Parliament and relieve the South of Ireland from railway monopoly. It was for this purpose that the grant of £93,000 was offered to the Rosslare Company in 1898, and he thought under the circumstances that the Cork and Waterford scheme had the best claim to the balance of that sum which still remained in the hands of the Treasury. That, however, would be a question for the Committee to consider, for he presumed that these three Bills would be referred to a Committee and that their merits would be investigated in the usual way, but he strongly hoped that the suggestion thrown out by his hon. friend that the Treasury should give some intimation as to the desirability of allotting this balance to the construction of a competitive road, would be followed. He had no connection with the financial arrangements of the promoters or with those in opposition to this scheme, but he strongly supported the Cork and Waterford Bill in the interests of healthy competition and of emancipating the South of Ireland from railway monopoly.

Mr. MOONEY (Newry) said he had no interest in any of these schemes, but he was a Member of the Committee which sat last year upon the Cork Junction Railway, and perhaps he might be permitted to intervene in the debate. It was said that that Committee would not allow the railway company to evade its responsibilities and for that reason threw out the Bill, although it was urgently impressed upon the Committee that there was an urgent necessity to adopt some scheme. What that scheme was he did not know, and he did not care, but he did know that the Committee were unanimously of opinion that some scheme should be evolved which would do away with the extraordinary system which existed in Cork at the present moment under which a large portion of the county of Cork was cut off from communication with the rest of Ireland. The finance of the particular scheme before them seemed to be unsound and the Committee adjourned the consideration of the Bill over Whitsuntide for the purpose of enabling the promoters to produce a better financial basis. When the promoters came back to the Committee the latter did not see their way then to accept the financial details of the Bill. He was perfectly sure that any Committee would carefully inquire into and give a very deliberate decision upon this matter. He therefore hoped that these Bills would be given a Second Reading and sent upstairs to a Committee in order that they might decide which was the best Bill. The Committee unanimously decided that the conditions of railway communication in Cork were disgraceful, and the sooner a remedy was found the better it would be for everybody.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) on behalf of the Ulster Party congratulated the hon. Member for East Down on the fair and generous spirit he had shown in withdrawing his opposition to the Bill. He hoped that that feeling would be reciprocated by the Nationalists when other Bills came before the House. The same spirit was not manifested a few weeks ago when a Bill vitally affecting the health of a district in Ireland was under consideration. Sanction to send that particular Bill to a Committee was then refused. It seemed very harsh treatment. The representatives of Ulster constituencies did not desire to inquire into the religion or politics of the people affected by the group of Bills now before the House. They only desired to do what was best for the district. By consenting to send these Bills to a Committee the Ulster Unionists were heaping coals of fire on the heads of hon. Members below the gangway. They had no desire to perpetuate the spirit shown by Nationalists a few weeks ago.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.) said that all the interest he had in this matter was that a link should be made. For that reason he asked that these three Bills should be sent before a Committee. He did not think it was necessary for him to enter into a discussion as to the merits of the Bills, although it would be as easy for him to state his views as anyone in the Committee. His only desire was that these three Bills should be referred to a Committee.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.) drew attention to the fact that all three Bills had the same object in view, and submitted that they ought to receive careful inquiry and consideration by a Select Committee. He had no doubt that they would be able to examine them in such a way that the best scheme would emerge.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

CORK AND WATERFORD RAILWAYS BILL. (BY ORDER).

CORK LINK RAILWAYS BILL. (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (No. 2) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN, Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.) in the Chair].

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 11, after the word 'solicitor' to insert the words 'if qualified.'"—(*Mr. Cave.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. F. E. SMITH, who was very indistinctly heard, was understood to say he had hoped the hon. and learned Solicitor-General would accept this Amendment without discussion. It was perfectly clear that as the business of the House was conducted at present it was the duty of the Law Officers to scrutinise very carefully the draughtsmanship of the Bills the Government presented, and it was the duty of the Opposition to attempt to give as much assistance as they could in all matters affecting draughtsmanship. If the hon. and learned Gentleman had seen his way to accept these words he would have made this Bill a more consistent and intelligent measure than it was at present. If these words were inserted after the word "solicitor" a very great ambiguity would be avoided. If the Committee gave its attention to the words of the section, they would see that the section at first sight was worded in a singular way. If the section was draughted without the words "if otherwise qualified" no reasonable person accustomed to construe Acts of Parliament would imagine that it related to any other disability. They had already swept away every other disability, and no one would consider that if these words were omitted the provisions contained in Clause 2 would be construed so as to override the existing disabilities. But the position had altogether changed, and he submitted that as the clause at present stood it was open to misconstruction and to possibilities of litigation, which he was sure the Solicitor-General would be the first to wish to avoid in the interests of the measure to which he had attached his name.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said the Committee was entitled to some reply from the Solicitor-General. As the clause stood, a solicitor could be appointed to be a magistrate in any county of England. Was that intended? If the restrictive words were excluded they would introduce into the clause a certain element of right for solicitors to be appointed all over the country, which was distinctly and avowedly excluded by the preceding clause. If the Solicitor-General preferred that the Amendment should not be taken at this point, it could be inserted after the word "county" in line 2. It would equally meet the point, and save the hon. and learned Gentleman's face.

*MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing) said he was glad that after so many years the Government were ready to rehabilitate the lower division of the legal profession by placing an unlimited confidence in solicitors which neither in fiction nor in real life had been shown them in years past.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said the Question was that the words "if qualified" be inserted.

*MR. NIELD said he was suggesting that the words in the Bill showed such satisfaction on the part of the Government in solicitors that their qualification was of no moment, and they were to be permitted to be appointed to any bench in any county without apparently the qualifications which other persons were required to have.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said he had informed the hon. Gentleman that he was out of order, and he must confine himself to the Amendment.

*MR. NIELD said with all possible respect he ventured to submit that his observations were directed to show that the proposal of the Government was that no qualification was necessary at all and in criticising this exhibition of confidence he was speaking to the Amendment, the direct purpose of which was to make it clear and free from ambiguity, so that while extending the opportunities for a solicitor being appointed the same qualification should be required from him as from other persons.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON said he had intended to move an Amendment to the Amendment to insert after "if" the word "otherwise." He hoped his hon. friend would accept his Amendment, which he now moved with the permission of the Committee.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment—

"To insert after the word 'if' the word 'otherwise.'"—(*Mr. Mitchell-Thomson.*)

Amendment to the proposed Amendment agreed to.

Question proposed, "That the word, 'if otherwise qualified' be there inserted."

*LORD HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) said there was no doubt that solicitors would be admirable adjuncts to the Bench, but the question whether they should fulfil those functions whether qualified or not gave rise to a very grave consideration. He failed to see why solicitors should be chosen for particular mention while other professions equally respectable and equally admirable in all their qualifications were absolutely unmentioned. The Committee were entitled to the opinion of the Government as to why the words had been omitted. The drafting of the Bill was certainly of a very loose character, and the Solicitor-General would be hardly treating the Committee with respect unless he told them why these words had been omitted in this clause and inserted in Clause 2.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 47; Noes, 297. (Division List No. 58.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn Sir Alex. F.
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bottomley, Horatio
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Herny William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Hamilton, Marquess of
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Nield, Herbert
O'Niell, Hon. Robert Torrens
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Starkey, John R.
Valentia, Viscount
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Mitchell-Thomson and Sir William Bull.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.

Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,John Williams(Devonp't
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bert am, Julius
Bethell,J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton,T.D. (Derbyshire, N.E.)
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs.,Leigh)
Bryce,Rt.Hn.James (Aberdeen
Bryce,J.A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats,Sir T.Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephens (Lambeth)
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C H (Sussex,E.Grins'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies,David (MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras,N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col. Alan (Hereford,S
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G.(Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy (Essex,Harwich)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs)
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N. (Doncas'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor,James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearson, Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mp'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson,Sir G. Scott(Bradf'd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)

Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

[The Chairman (Mr. Emmott) here took the Chair.]

*Mr. JOHN RUTHERFORD (Lancashire, Darwen) asked, on a point of order, whether solicitors who were Members of the House had a right to vote in the division which had just taken place. He believed that some fifteen solicitors had voted. The rules were very particular in regard to hon. Members voting upon any matter in which they were directly interested.

*The CHAIRMAN: This is not a question of special or pecuniary interest, and under those conditions I think a solicitor has a right to vote.

Mr. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye) did not think the Government could possibly intend to give those special advantages which were expressly taken away from every other class of the community. He begged to move to insert the words "in which he resides."

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 12, after the word 'county,' to insert the words 'in which he resides.'"—(*Mr. Courthope.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. F. E. SMITH suggested that the object of his hon. friend would be achieved if in the earlier section of the Bill he moved to insert—

"That a solicitor may be appointed a justice of the peace for any county in or within seven miles of which he resides."

He suggested that this was a matter on which the Opposition were entitled to some guidance from the Solicitor-General as to whether under the clause as drafted there was or was not any geographical limitation of the right of a solicitor to act as a justice of the peace. As a matter of legal construction would it not be possible for a solicitor to be appointed a justice of the peace for a county in which he had no residential or geographical qualification?

*Sir W. ROBSON said he desired to remind the Committee that the Bill did not profess to code the law relating to justices of the peace. It proposed merely to amend the law in one or two definite particulars, the main particular being to abolish the qualification by estate. That was the subject matter of the first clause, but it left the rest of the law with regard to justices of the peace standing. There was a residential qualification in the case of county magistrates imposed under statutes of Henry V. The qualification by estate was removed by this Bill, but the old residential qualification remained. Having explained the law on this matter, he hoped the House would not think that he was at all lacking in respect if he refrained from getting up and explaining it again and again if hon. Members opposite insisted upon putting the same questions repeatedly.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) said it was very desirable that hon. Members who had not the legal knowledge of the luminaries on the front bench opposite should get all the information they could on the different points in the Bill before they gave their assent to the measure. The Solicitor-General had stated that the law with respect to the residential qualification of a person appointed as a justice of the peace was passed during the reign of Henry V. In the case of a solicitor it was now proposed that there should be no residential qualification. He thought it was a very serious matter that they should be called upon to make this extraordinary change in the law on behalf of one class of the community. He would support the Amendment because it seemed to him very desirable that the residential qualification which was considered necessary in the reign of Henry V. should be maintained now.

LORD DALRYMPLE (Wigton) said this Bill was to apply to Scotland as well as England, and according to the Solicitor-General it was necessary on account of some law passed in the reign of Henry V. His knowledge of history was limited, but he had not yet heard that there was any king of Scotland called Henry V.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON said the Solicitor-General was not entitled to found his case for Scotland on any law passed for England in the reign of Henry V. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to consider very seriously the Amendment which had been put forward by the hon. Member for Rye.

LORD HELMSLEY said he had received with great gratitude the explanation of the Solicitor-General, but that explanation only showed that the clause was badly drafted. A Bill of this kind ought to be plain, and understood by an ordinary layman. He maintained that not one layman in a hundred could understand it, and that the only people who would benefit from it would be lawyers.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said it was not necessary either for the hon. Member or his constituents to understand any of these Acts of Parliament. He should vote against the Amendment for the same reason as he had voted against the previous Amendment. If he understood the explanation which the hon. and learned Solicitor-General had given it was that although every solicitor was a person and would come within the clause which related to residential qualification, yet every person was not a solicitor. He suggested that the Amendment should be withdrawn because the whole object of the Amendment had been tested in a previous division. It was quite clear that so long as a man was a solicitor, no matter where he resided or where he practised, he was entitled under this clause to be on the county bench.

MR. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire W.R., Barkston Ash) said he certainly hoped that the Committee would not accept the suggestion of the hon. Member for Liverpool who had now gone below the gangway and had told the Committee he was an interested person. They were grateful to the Solicitor-General for his explanation, but the hon. and learned Gentleman had not explained one of the points raised, and that was why this disqualification should not be taken out of this particular clause.

*THE CHAIRMAN said that the hon. Member was not discussing the Amendment before the Committee.

MR. LANE-FOX said he was anxious to bow to the ruling of the Chairman, but he wished to press the point that the hon. Member for Liverpool was a prejudiced person, and should not be allowed to mislead the House.

MR. COURTHOPE expressed the hope that the Solicitor-General would see his way to accept his Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 54; Noes, 317. (Division List No. 59.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood,RtHn.Sir Alex.F.
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn.HughO
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt. Hn. SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,RtHn.A.J.(City Lond.)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach,Hn. Michael HughHicks
Bottomley, Horatio
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Lord R.(Marylebone, E.)
Coates,E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Craig, Captain James (Down,E.
Craik, Sir Henry

Dalrymple, Viscount
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Govan
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F. W. F.(BuryS.Edm'd
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt. Hn. Col.W.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
M'Calmont, Colonel James

Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Rasch Sir Frederic Carne
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford John (Lancashire)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos.Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford,East)
Smith,F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Starkey, John R.
Thomson,W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Valentia, Viscount
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Courthope and Sir William Bull.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Asquith,Rt.Hn. HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker,Joseph A.(Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring,Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John

Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, JohnWilliams(Devonp'rt
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H.(Essex,Romford)

Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Black,Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D.(Derbyshire,N.E.)
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner,J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh
Bryce,Rt.Hn.James(Aberdeen)
Bryce,J. A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn

Burke, E. Haviland-
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col. Alan (Hereford, S.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guiland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncastr
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearson, Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert N.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel

Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen,E.)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse,Sir JT(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said he rose with mingled feelings to move the Amendment which stood in his name, which was to leave out all the words after county in Clause 3. He had feelings of gratitude in the first place that the public at large and a beneficent Government had at last awakened to the proper position of the members of the solicitors' profession to which he had the honour to belong. For hundreds of years solicitors, simply because they were solicitors, had been debarred from acting as magistrates. They had always resented it and very properly considered that such a bar was an insult to the profession. There was no reason why a solicitor should not be a magistrate. But the reason he moved this Amendment was that the Government had only gone half way. The Bill said that solicitors might act as magistrates, but at the same time it said it should not be lawful for any solicitor being a justice of the peace to practice either by himself or his partner before any justice in that county. A barrister could practise anywhere, and he felt certain that when this Amendment was put the members of the senior branch of the profession present in the Committee would support it. Another argument why a solicitor should be allowed to practise was that a son often practised for his father. Then there was the case of a solicitor practising before his father. The Solicitor-General having thus far rid solicitors of disabilities he should have the strength of his convictions and free solicitors from all the barriers and restrictions from which they had suffered for so many years.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 12, to leave out from the word 'county,' to the end of the Clause.'"—(*Mr. Charles Craig.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out, to the word 'or,' in line 13, stand part of the Clause."

SIR W. ROBSON said he was quite sure that solicitors generally would make no objection to this very limited disqualification. They would not regard it as an insult to be asked to abstain from practising before justices for the county or of a borough within the county for which they were appointed justices. If they took up a judicial office they ought to accept with it conditions that would sustain the public confidence, and he was sure that the bulk of the solicitors in the country would welcome any provision in that direction. The clause had, of course, nothing to do with a solicitor practising before a partner. The clause was that a solicitor who was a justice might not directly or indirectly practise before the justices. He thought that would commend itself to the fairness of the Committee.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) asked the Solicitor-General whether, in the event of the clause being passed, he would give consideration to a case which was within his knowledge in which a solicitor in a certain town, who was clerk to the justices, was asked to become chairman of the urban council. If he accepted that office he became *ex officio* a magistrate, and as such could not act as clerk to the justices. He suggested that a solicitor in that position might be allowed to refrain from taking the office of magistrate, otherwise a hardship would be done.

SIR W. ROBSON said the hon. and gallant Gentleman had put very fairly before the Committee a particular case, he would not say of hardship, but in which a disadvantage was incurred by a particular person. It was impossible, however, to frame or remove a disqualification without giving rise to some such case as that suggested. He was afraid that the only thing the Gentleman referred to could do would be to decline the honour offered him.

LORD R. CECIL said the question was of rather more importance than the Solicitor-General appeared to realise. No one doubted that it was very desirable that those who acted as magistrates should not practise before the bench of which they were members; but this was a question whether it was desirable to put that as a positive disqualification into an Act of Parliament. It appeared to him to be a very unnecessarily insulting provision. A barrister was entitled to be a magistrate and also practise before the bench of which he was a magistrate. Why should they make this distinction between solicitors and barristers? He could not conceive any reason why they should not consider a solicitor to be as honourable and respectable as a barrister.

MR. LUPTON rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Question again proposed.

MR. LANE-FOX said that upon this Amendment he was in full agreement with the Solicitor-General. What was a solicitor? He was a person who could not possibly give an unbiassed opinion. The local solicitors knew the secrets and the skeletons in every cupboard, and they knew the business of almost all the people living in their district. The effect of this Amendment would be very serious, and he could not support it.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said that every solicitor had to give an undertaking in the words of the present clause, and he thought that it was a proper provision to make. He would suggest that it should be made stronger.

MR. SOLICITOR-GENERAL rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 310; Noes, 52. (Division List No. 60.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Neaton
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Caryon
Benn, John Williams (Devonp'rt
BennWT'w'rH'ml'ts S.G'orges
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs. Leigh)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galwy
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras N
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col. Alan (Hereford, S.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio

Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearson, Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'pt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt. Hn. Sir Alex F.
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (City Lond.
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
M'Callum, John M.
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton
Starkey, John R.
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Valentia, Viscount
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Younger, George

Tellers for the Noes—Sir William Bull and Mr. Charles Craig.

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out, to the word 'or,' in line 13, stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 318; Noes, 46. (Division List No. 61.)

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton

Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert H.
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams(Devonprt
Benn, W.(T'w'rHamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J.H.(Essex, Romford)
Billson, Alfred
Black, ArthurW.(Bedfordshire)
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J.A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Chas.
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, W. H.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard K.
Cave, George
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir W. J. (S Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C.H(Sussex, EGrinst'd)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Davies, David(MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W.H(StPancras, N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col. Alan (Hereford, S
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hn. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r.)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Helmsley, Viscount
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy(Essex, Harwich)
Lever, W.H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M. (Falkirk Bghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Chas. (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall(Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G.Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Chas. N. (Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.
O Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O Connor, James (Wicklow, W
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearson, Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C.E. (Edinb'gh, Central)

Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T. F.)Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Chas. H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson, SirGScott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E(Dundee)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas.E.(Manchester)
Scott, A.H. (AshtonunderLyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hn. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph(Chesh
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abindgon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E. R.
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, SirJT(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt. Hn.SirAlexF
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn H. O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn.Sir H
Balcarres, Lord
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N
Beach, Hn. Michael H. Hicks
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain J. (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Duncan, Robert(Lanark,Govan
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey,F.W.F.(BurySEdm'ds)
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Keswick, William
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Meysey-Thompson, Major E.C.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool,Walton
Starkey, John R.
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Valentia, Viscount
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Younger, George

Tellers for the Noes—Sir William Bull and Mr. Charles Craig.

And, it being after Eleven of the clock, the Chairman proceeded to interrupt the business.

Whereupon Mr. Solicitor-General claimed, "That the Question 'That the Clause stand part of the Bill' be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 304; Noes, 52. (Division List No. 62.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.

Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,John Williams(Devonp'rt
Benn, W.(T'w'r Hamlets,SGeo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Black, A. W. (Bedfordshire)
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire,N.E.
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs.,Leigh
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Chas.
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J (S.Pancras,W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C H (Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Davies,David(MontgomeryCo.)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson,H.W.(St.Pancras,N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col. Alan (Hereford,S
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Right Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex,Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S
MacVeigh, Chas. (Donegal, E.)
M‘Callum, John M.
M‘Crae, George
M‘Kean, John
M‘Kenna, Reginald
M‘Killop, W.
M‘Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G.Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Chas. N. (Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary,Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearson, Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinburgh,Central
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Holland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson, Sir GScott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day

Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester
Scott, A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hn. T. (Hawick, B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowdon, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J.T.(Hudd'rsf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES — Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn Sir Alex F.
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Balcarres, Lord
Barrie, H.T.(Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos, H. A. E
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Duncan, Robt. (Lanark, Govan
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Hamilton, Marquess of
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F.W.F.(Bury S.Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Keswick, William
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Meysey-Thompson, Major E.C.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Remnant, J. Farquharson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton
Starkey, John R.
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Valentia, Viscount
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Claude Hay and Mr. Watson Rutherford.

Question put accordingly, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 295; Noes, 42. (Division List No. 63.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A.(Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams (Devonp'rt
Benn, W.(T'w'r Hamlets, S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T.D. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J.A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hon. Sydney Chas.
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cave, George
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)

Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, SirWm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, CH (Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Davies, David(MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, H.W.(St.Pancras,N
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col.Alan(Hereford,S.)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glover, Thomas
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazelton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, W.Bateman(Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy(Essex,Harwich
Lever, W.H. (Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M. (FalkirkB'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeigh, Charles(Donegal,E.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G.Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearson, Sir W.D. (Colchester)
Philipps, Owen, C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C.E. (Edinburgh Central)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Holland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Samuel, S. M. Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas.E.(Manchester)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick, B.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowdon, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S, (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Verney, F. W.

Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glagmoran)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, SirJ.T.(Hudd'rsf'd
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt.Hn.SirAlex.F
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Beach, Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone,E.)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim,S.
Craig, CaptainJames(Down,E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Duncan, Robert(Lanark,Govan
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey, F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'd
Hill, SirClement(Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Liddell, Henry
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Meysey-Thompson, Major E.C.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Smith, F.E.(Liverpool,Walton)
Starkey, John R.
Thomson, W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Valentia, Viscount
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lonsdale and Viscount Helmsley.

Whereupon the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this day.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he desired as a matter of order to ask whether under the new rules the House was not supposed to rise at 11.30, and if so whether it was in order to proceed now with any further business.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think it will be desirable to follow the same practice as in the last Parliament. The practice was that in case the House sat after one o'clock the Orders of the Day were gone through.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Does that also apply to Bills moved and read a second time and not objected to?

*MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. MOONEY: The Standing Order lays down that unless it is a Bill originating in Committee of Ways and Means it shall not be proceeded with.

*MR. SPEAKER: The practice uniformly was as I have described, that is to say, if by reason of divisions or for any other reason the House sat after one o'clock the Orders of the Day were read through, but if the Orders were reached before one o'clock when one o'clock arrived the House rose. That was the interpretation placed on Standing Order No. 1, and I think it will probably be desirable to continue that practice.

DRUNKENNESS (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn.

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 2nd May, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [Lords] (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

Cathcart District Railway (Superfluous Lands) Order Confirmation Bill; North Berwick Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Friday.

Water Provisional Order Bill, "to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade under The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Poole Water." Presented by Mr. Kearley; supported by Mr. Lloyd-George; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 183.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill, "to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Beckenham, Oswaldtwistle, Rochdale Rochford (Rural), and Warrington," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Mr. John Burns; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 184.]

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) Bill, "to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to the Bury Saint Edmunds Incorporation," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Mr. John Burns; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 185.]

Cork City Railways and Works Bill. Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Cork Junction Railways Bill in Session 1905 be referred to the Committee on the Cork City Railways and Works Bill.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Aber; Britannic; Brynsheffrey; Gilfach Goch; Liversedge; Netherton; Old Hill; Quarry Bank; Shireoaks and Steetley; and, Wyke Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Addington; Ash next Sandwich (two); Ashton; Bedminster; Birkenhead; Bosham and New Fishbourne; Bishopston (two); Caterham; Caterham Valley; Cheetham; Childrey; Chillenden; Chiswick (two); Dudley; Edge Lane; Felpham; Felpham and Middleton; Goodrich; Grasmere (two); Great Toller; Hammersmith (six); Haxey; Heathfield; Hertingfordbury (two); Hillmorton; Hinckley; Hoar Cross (two); Hythe; Ingoldmells; Isle of Elmley (two); Islington; Kingstone and Thruxton (two); Linton; Liverpool; Llangarron; Llanwarne; London (three); Loppington; Lymington (two); Merton (two); Mildenhall; New Fishbourne; Northbourne; Oving; Peterchurch; Ramsgate (two); Ravenscourt Park; Ravenstonedale; Reading; Rochester (two); Ryde; Salesbury (two); Shepherd's Bush; Staines; Stanford; Stanford with Postling; Stanley (two); Stodmarsh; Tilmanstone; Turner's Hill Tyringham cum Filgrave; Wakefield; Wellington Heath (two); Westbere (two); Westhampnett; West Kensington; Weston Subedge; Woburn; Wollaton; and, York; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Sarum and Wilts, against; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES TAXATION, &c. (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Aberdeen, against; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Aberdeen, against; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Edinburgh; and, Scottish Executive of the British Women's Temperance Association; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL.

Petition from Westminster, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF COKE BILL.

Petition from Cambridge, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the Scottish National Sabbath Union, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VAGRANT CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Bloomsbury, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

DRUMDOE, COUNTY ROSCOMMON (INQUIRY).

Return [presented April 30th] to be printed. [No. 151.]

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHER (IRELAND) PENSION FUND.

Account [presented May 1st] to be printed. [No. 152.]

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 153.]

GAS COMPANIES (METROPOLIS).

Copy presented, of Accounts of the Metropolitan Gas Companies for the year 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 154.]

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address, April 30th; *Mr. Robert Price*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 155.]

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOURERS) (CRIMES).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address, February 21st; *Mr. Mackarness*]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Return ordered, "showing (1) names of Judicial and other Commissioners, of the Legal and Lay Assistants and Assessors in connection with the Land Commission holding office on the 1st day of January, 1906; (2) date of original appointment; (3) date upon which appointment expires; (4) age of appointment; (5) residence at time of appointment; (6) locality in which practical experience of land was acquired; (7) where educated; (8) previous occupation; (9) acreage of land farmed; (10) whether held as owner or tenant; (11) what other experience in agriculture; and (12) what experience in valuing, mapping, and surveying (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 151, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Working Hours in Royal Dockyards.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty when the proposed new scheme as to working hours in the Royal Dockyards will take effect, and what is the reason for departing from the date of April 2nd, mentioned in the Admiralty order.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The date for commencement of the contemplated new scheme of working hours, which provides for a uniform forty-eight hour week throughout the year, is not yet definitely fixed. April 2nd, the first working day of the present financial year, was a provisional suggestion only. It has been not found practicable to deal with all the details involved in a change of this magnitude in time to admit of the institution of the new scheme on that date, but it is hoped to introduce it early in July.

Land Purchase in County Galway.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Estates Commissioners are negotiating with the view of purchasing some eleven farms of four to five acres of land each in the townland of Mincloon, Galway, at the request of the tenants on the same, which purchase will include a grazing portion of some forty acres adjoining and belonging to the same landlord; whether the uneconomic holdings will be enlarged by reason of this purchase; whether attempts are now being made to deprive the tenants of a portion of the seaweed which heretofore they have been allowed to use; and, if so, will he give such instructions as will protect the interests of the tenants in this matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I understand from the hon. Member that the estate referred to is the property of the Alliance Assurance Company. The Estates Commissioners inform me that they are unable to trace any proceedings before them in reference to that estate.

Devonport Dockyard.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the increased accommodation at Devonport, the breaking-up of obsolete ships with dockyard labour and the sale of the materials would yield a better financial result to the Government than the prices realised at recent sales; and whether he is prepared to give the dockyard an opportunity of showing what can be done in this department.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) There is no reason to anticipate that the breaking-up of old vessels in the dockyards would yield a better financial result than selling them by public auction, and it is not proposed to adopt the course suggested.

Hamburg Seamen Strikes.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that police officers were employed at Cardiff, on Thursday, April 19th, assisting to send away by train a number of seamen of various nationalities engaged by foreign shipping agents to take the place of seamen now on strike at Hamburg, in Germany; whether he is aware that one of the officers threatened a coloured seaman who objected to go; whether he is aware that police officers have been employed at Dover on similar work, and also members of the Metropolitan Police Force; if he can state under whose instructions these officers were rendering foreign shipping agents assistance; and whether he will give instructions in future that English police officers are not to be employed to assist foreign shipping agents.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have not heard of the employment of the police on the occasions referred to by the hon. Member; but I presume that they were present for the purpose of performing their duty in the maintenance of public order. I will, however, make inquiry of the Cardiff police authorities, and also of the other police authorities, if the hon. Member will indicate precisely the occasions to which he refers.

School Inspection in Ireland.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education approve of inspectors holding the annual inspection of a school on the day on which the annual vacation commences; and whether, seeing that such a test is unfair to the teacher, steps will be taken to get inspectors to endeavour to meet the teachers' wishes in this respect.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the date on which the annual inspection of a school takes place depends, amongst other things, on the engagements of the inspector and the circumstances of the school. If the particulars of any case in which it is alleged the date fixed for the annual inspection has operated unfairly towards the teacher are supplied to the Commissioners they will investigate the matter.

South African Constabulary—Officers' Pensions.

MR. WILLIAM KESWICK (Surrey, Epsom): To ask the Under-Secretary of

State for the Colonies whether the officers of the South African Constabulary, serving in the Orange River Colony, would be entitled to pensions upon the reduction or disbandment of the force; and, if not, what special measures are contemplated for compensating the e officers for the loss of their employment, should the force be disbanded upon the grant of self-government to the Colony.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The terms of appointment of the officers of the South African Constabulary are not such as to entitle them to expect a pension in the contingency suggested.

Royal Naval Hospital, Stonehouse.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS BENN: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that in Government works carried out at the Royal Naval Hospital, Stonehouse, masons have been employed to do the work of plasterers, and that the premium system has been adopted with regard to such work; and whether such conditions are consistent with the trades union rules agreed between masters and men in these trades outside the dockyards.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Masons have been employed to do the work of plasterers in certain cases where the work consisted of patching and jobbing, *i.e.*, where a mason did cutting-out of brickwork or masonry, etc., he made good the plastering as well, and so finished the job on which he started. As regards the second part of the Question, the premium system has not been adopted in the case of such jobbing work previously mentioned, but it has been adopted in regard to plastering done by plasterers on new work. With regard to the last part of the Question, it is believed that the premium system is not employed by firms in the building trade in the Plymouth district; but as the men cannot lose but only stand to gain by this system, it is not considered that its adoption is in any way inconsistent with the rules agreed between masters and men.

Ordnance Survey Employees' Grievances.

Lieutenant-Colonel PHILIPPS (Southampton): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the order issued last year to the arsenals and dockyards, whereby in the case of reduction of the staff the men selected for discharge should be drawn from those with less than fifteen years service, is applied in the case of the Ordnance Survey Department; and, if not, the reason why the Government employees in the Ordnance Survey with long service should be treated with less consideration, especially in view of the fact that, owing to the nature of the work in the Ordnance Survey, it is practically impossible for an employee of long service to find suitable employment outside the department; and whether, seeing that amongst the employees in the Derby division of the Ordnance Survey who are now under notice of discharge, there are a number of employees of very long service in the department, ranging up to thirty-three years, and that there are between 400 and 500 men in the department who have less than fifteen years service, many of whom are performing duties precisely similar to those men now under notice of discharge, he will, when making such discharges, if any such discharges are absolutely necessary, undertake to apply to the Ordnance Survey the same principles in recognising long service as are now applied to the arsenals and dockyards.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The order to which my hon. friend refers does not apply to the Ordnance Survey. It is, however, the general rule on the Ordnance Survey, when a reduction of staff becomes necessary, to select the younger men for discharge where possible, but the circumstances of each case have to be considered. In the case of the abolition of the Derby division it is not possible to make room elsewhere for all the older men in that office by discharging younger men from other divisions. There is a certain amount of work that must be done by youths, for which the older men are in no way suitable. Younger men and men with inferior records in other divisions have already been displaced, as far as possible, in order to retain the older men, but it is not practicable to do this in all cases.

Out of fifty-one men discharged within the last twelve months at least thirty-seven were young men with short service.

Separation Orders.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): To ask Mr. Attorney-General if he can state the number of separation orders made by courts of summary jurisdiction in each of the years 1904 and 1905.

(*Answered by Sir Lawson Walton.*) Table XIV. of the Judicial (Criminal) Statistics for 1904 show that the number of separation orders made by courts of summary jurisdiction in that year was 6,752, viz., 273 under section 5 (2) of The Licensing Act, 1902; 163 under section 5 (1) of the same Act; and 6,316 under section 5 of The Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act, 1895. The figures for last year are not yet complete.

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Rates.

MR. LIDDELL (Down, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Great Northern Railway Company (Ireland) charge the same rates for goods from Belfast to Glenavy as from Belfast to Antrim, though Glenavy is ten miles nearer Belfast than Antrim, and although the total distance from Belfast to Antrim is only 27½ miles; and whether he will make representations to the railway company on the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) No complaint has been made to the Board of Trade with respect to the rates to Glenavy, but I have asked the railway company for their observations on the subject, and will communicate with the hon. Member on receiving their reply.

Stamping of Documents at Newport, Monmouthshire.

MR. L. HASLAM (Monmouth Boroughs): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury is he aware that inconvenience to and delay in the transaction of business are caused by the absence of facilities for stamping documents at Newport, Monmouthshire; and, seeing that this absence of facilities involves not only financial loss to traders, but places them on unequal terms of competition with business centres, where stamping facilities are at hand, will he consider the advisability of providing the desired facilities at an early date.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The provision of stamping centres depends upon (a) the population of the town or city which they would serve, (b) the average number of documents which require stamping, and (c) the existing facilities in a neighbouring town. In the present case the population and number of documents fall below that of any town which at present has such a centre. Moreover, facilities exist at Cardiff, which is not far distant from Newport. As the number of documents to be stamped would not be increased by the creation of a centre, the course proposed would involve an additional expenditure without any compensation to the Exchequer. There are many towns which have greater claims, but at present have no stamping facilities. In these circumstances, although I regret the fact stated in the first part of the Question, I am unable to authorise the desired concession. My hon. friend, no doubt, is already aware that facilities are provided by the Post Office for the transmission, free of cost, of documents, executed or unexecuted, on prepayment of the duty.

Celluloid Hair Combs.

MR. E. BETHELL (Essex, Maldon): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been drawn to accidents arising from the use of celluloid hair combs; and whether, having regard to the inflammable nature of this material, he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation to secure the marking of these articles in such a way that the public may know the danger to which they are exposed by their use.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I am aware that a certain number of accidents have arisen from this cause, especially when impure celluloid is used. The question of putting marks upon materials of all sorts that are likely to be dangerous is a very wide one, and I do not see my way to deal specially with celluloid, but I hope the question will call attention to the possible danger of these articles, and will put the public on their guard.

Railway Clerks and the Workmen's Compensation Bill.

Mr. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the danger frequently attending the performance of their duties, he will include railway clerks generally or railway checking clerks within the scope of the Workmen's Compensation Bill, now under the consideration of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I think it will be more convenient for hon. Members for me to defer making any statement on this point until the time comes to discuss it in Committee.

Church of England School and Nonconformist Scholars.

Mr. W. H. LEVER (Cheshire, Wirral): To ask the President of the Board of Education, if he can state in how many parishes where a Church of England school is the only available elementary school, the managers have arranged for the children of Nonconformists attending such school to have religious instruction in accordance with the faith of their parents.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Board have no information on the subject.

Upkeep of Voluntary Schools.

Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R. Elland): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state the total amount expended by the managers upon the upkeep of voluntary schools from subscriptions or sources other than rates and taxes during each of the last three years.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Board have no information on the subject.

Bombay-Sinde Railway.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the construction of the proposed Bombay-Sinde Railway has been sanctioned by the Secretary of State in Council; and whether he can state what the length and gauge of the railway will be, and what is the estimated cost per mile.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The construction of a railway on the broad gauge to connect Bombay with Sind has been sanctioned, but there is still some uncertainty as to the route which will be followed. The Railway Board have sanctioned a reconnaissance of alternative routes to the north and south of the Runn of Cutch. Supposing the southern route to be adopted, the length would be about 295 miles, and the cost has been roughly estimated at £1,406,667, or £4,768 per mile.

Army Pensioners.

Mr. THORNE (West Ham, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can see his way clear to order the payment of Army pensioners weekly or monthly instead of quarterly, as at present.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This question is at present receiving careful consideration.

Army Forage Cap.

Colonel LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can see his way to allowing the cavalry to revert to the old pattern forage cap for walking out in now that a khaki cap has been issued for parades.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The question of reverting to the old pattern forage cap for cavalry was fully considered when the introduction of the new peaked cap was under discussion. The new pattern peaked cap will be issued for walking out purposes when the stock of the present pattern is exhausted.

Army Desertions in Scotland.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the number of desertions from the respective barracks in Scotland during each year since 1900.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures readily available are detailed below. No figures have been given prior to 1902, as any figures for the period of the South African War would cause considerable labour to compile, and would not serve any useful purpose for comparison.

Cavalry, Artillery, and Infantry.

Number of desertions from the respective barracks in Scotland, during each year from 1902.

Period.	Aberdeen (Castle Hill).	Ayr.	Barry Camp.	Berwick (Infantry).	Edinburgh (Piershill).	Edinburgh (Castle).	Fort George (Albany).	Glasgow (Maryhill).	Glencorse.	Hamilton (Infantry).	Inchkeith Camp.	Inverness (Cameron).	Leith Fort.	Perth (Queen's Barracks).	Stirling (Castle).	Stobs.	Totals.
1st Jan. to 31st Dec. 1902 . .	45	88	—	89	7	7	17	58	61	82	2	46	14	101	92	—	709
1st Jan. to 30th Sept. 1903 .	4	22	—	24	14	50	53	53	30	43	3	12	10	8	45	24	395
1st Oct. 1903 to 30th Sept. 1904.	10	11	—	11	31	39	19	46	34	54	—	1	8	7	15	12	298
1st Oct. 1904 to 30th Sept. 1905.	12	13	8	19	26	58	19	40	28	43	—	3	11	4	15	4	303
	71	134	8	143	78	154	108	197	153	222	5	62	43	120	167	40	1,705

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Keyham Engineer Cadets.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether an estimate can be formed of the value of the services of the engineer cadets at Keyham during the last financial year in refitting the machinery of the "Ringdove," "Traveller," and "Thistle," and for their assistance on other vessels; and whether he will state how far Keyham College is self-suporting as the result of this work.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): A report has been called from the dockyard, and I will communicate the result to my hon. friend as soon as it has been received.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the attention of the Board has been drawn to the recent Report of the Committee appointed by the Institute of Civil Engineers, with representatives of all the distinctive engineering bodies, and to the Committee's recommendation in favour of engineering education and specialisation commencing at seventeen years of age; and whether this recommendation will receive the consideration of the First Lord of the Admiralty before steps are taken to stop the entries of engineer students into Keyham in favour of the Osborne cadets entered at thirteen years of age.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The attention of the Admiralty has been drawn to the Report in question, but it does not appear that the inquiries of the Committee extended to marine engineering as applied to the naval service, nor have any communications passed between the Committee and the Admiralty on the subject. The Report deals with a scheme for the training of youths whose after career and employment would be essentially different from the career and duties of a naval officer.

New Short Rifle.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will make arrangements for the new short rifle to be placed in the tea-room for inspection by Members of the House; and if he can not see his way to adopt this course, will he say when it can be inspected.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): A specimen shall be put in the tea-room.

Ross-shire Militia.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the names of the firms with whom the commanding officer of the 3rd Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Militia) communicated in order to secure a special steamer for the conveyance of the men of the Ross-shire Militia, living in the Lews, from Stornoway to Kyle of Lochalsh, on the evening of the 3rd April.

*MR. HALDANE: The firm was that of Messrs. MacBrayne, Limited.

Cost of Rifle Manufacture.

MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that the Enfield Factory made 83,590 rifles at a cost of £2 9s. 5d. each in 190-12, 60,757 at a cost of £2 11s. 6d. each in 1902-3, and 14,805 at a cost of £2 13s. 7d. each in 1903-4, will he state why orders for rifles should now be given to the trade while our own machinery is standing idle, as shown by the reduced production just stated; and will he give the number of rifles and the cost as produced in 1904-5 and 1905-6.

*MR. HALDANE: The grant of orders to the trade, while the Ordnance Factory machinery is not fully occupied, is part of a settled policy. This policy has been explained to the House on previous occasions, and I believe it to be a very valuable one. As regards the figures asked for in the Question, these were given fully in reply to a Question put yesterday by my hon. friend.

Vaccine for the Army and Navy.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any calf lymph produced at the Army and Navy Vaccine Institute last year is preserved on ivory points; and, if so, how many; and will he state the original source of the lymph with which the calves at this establishment have been inoculated.

*MR. HALDANE: No lymph is now preserved at the Institute on ivory points. The stock calf lymph at present in use has been obtained through the courtesy of Messieurs St. Yves Menard and Chambon from the Institute of Animal Vaccination, Paris.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington): Can we have some of this lymph in the tea-room also?

Operations in Natal.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can say how many troops the Natal Government now have ready for operations; how many mounted and how many infantry; the estimated number of rebels with Bambata and with Sigananda; and whether there is official information that Sigananda is in rebellion?

THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): It is not, I think, always desirable to give detailed information as to the composition and strength of forces about to be employed in active military operations. It is, I think, sufficient to state that the Zululand Field Force numbers about 2,000 men, the majority of whom are mounted. The rebels were reported on the 27th of April to have three strong impis, but I cannot say the numbers. The Governor telegraphed on 17th April that Sigananda's tribe had broken into open rebellion.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.) asked whether the hon. Gentleman could explain with any kind of exactitude the phrase "state of rebellion."

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): What are they rebelling against?

MR. CHURCHILL: I presume a state of disorder which is menacing to life and property would constitute a state of rebellion.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the hon. Gentleman whether he had not reason to believe that this unfortunate and lamentable state of affairs in South Africa was the direct outcome of the recent summary execution of natives.

MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir. I am bound to say I do not think there is any connection between the executions to which my hon. friend has referred and the rising in Zululand.

MR. MYER: Is not the hon. Gentleman aware that this rebellion has been engineered by the Natal Government for the past two or three years.

[No Answer was returned.]

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) asked whether it was not a fact that the rebellion was almost entirely due to the imposition of the poll tax, and whether it was not an act of rebellion for a chief to leave his kraal without having committed any other offence.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think these are questions for which notice ought to be given. They do not properly arise out of the question on the paper.

The Boers and Chinese Crime.

*MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the report sof a meeting held on April 7th at Vrededorp, at which General Botha, addressing a meeting of citizens of the Transvaal, said that the atrocities which were being committed by the Chinamen must be put an end to, that the uncertainty of life and property which at present existed in the Transvaal could no longer continue, and that he had asked Lord Selborne to receive a deputation of himself and his friends; will he say whether Lord Selborne would receive such a deputation; and whether what took place would be communicated to the House.

MR. CHURCHILL: My attention has been called to a newspaper report of the speech. It appears that Lord Selborne is to receive a deputation on May 4th. I have received no official information on the subject, but Lord Selborne will no doubt report the result in due course, and the question of publication will then be considered.

Chinese Deserters from the Mines.

*Mr. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a letter, dated March 29th, by the President of the Chamber of Mines in the Transvaal, in which he states that the recently reported outrages by wandering Chinese deserting from the mines had caused the gravest concern to the directors of the mining companies; that the Chamber had been in communication with the Government on the matter of more effective police protection; that a deputation would wait upon the Attorney-General to discuss the matter in all its bearings on March 30th; whether the Secretary of State had received any Report of the interview between the deputation and the Attorney-General; and whether he would lay such Report before the House.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I have seen the letter to which the hon. Member refers. The Secretary of State has been informed by Lord Selborne in a despatch received by the last mail that the mining companies have been actively engaged in consultation with the acting Lieutenant-Governor and himself in considering whether it is possible to take further steps to exercise an effective supervision over the coolies, and that he was expecting definite proposal from them shortly. The Secretary of State expects to receive a further report as to the result of these communications, and will consider the question of publication or its receipt.

Withdrawal of the Reward for Bambata's Capture.

Mr. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can inform the House whether the price set upon Bambata's head has now been withdrawn by the Natal Government; and whether His Majesty's Government has any communication from the Governor of Natal as to whether natives now captured are to be tried by military or civil courts.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir. The offer of a reward for the capture of Bambata alive or dead has been withdrawn; and the Secretary of State has been informed that it is the intention of the Natal Government to try all natives other than those actually taken fighting with arms in their hands by the civil tribunals and not by courts martial.

The Executed Natives.

Mr. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state when the House may expect to be put in possession of the evidence against the condemned twelve natives which satisfied the Governor of Natal that they had been properly tried.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The Governor has been asked to send copies of the evidence. I am in communication with him as to the question of the publication of Papers. The evidence, which is very bulky, may be expected to reach the Secretary of State before the end of the month.

Papers on Natal.

Mr. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD asked when it was proposed to lay further Papers on Natal on the table of the House?

Mr. CHURCHILL said he undertook before the Easter recess to lay Papers, but events had since arisen which would render it necessary to include further papers. But as he gathered from the hon. Gentleman it would be convenient to have as much information as possible up to the present, he would draw the attention of the Secretary of State to the desire for an interim Blue-book on Natal affairs, and he should think that by Monday next one could be laid.

Railways on the Afghan Frontier.

Mr. LYNCH (Yorkshire, W. R., Ripon): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, what progress has been made with the extension of the railway from Peshawar towards the Afghan frontier; and whether, in view of the effect of the penetration of Russian influence into Persia during recent years upon the frontier problem in India, he will refuse to sanction the expenditure of large sums of money in connection with railways on the north-west frontier.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. John Morley, Montrose Burghs): I stated on February 26th that a railway 22½ miles in length was under construction, from a point near Jamrud on the existing line to a point on the Kabul river.† Any proposals that may be received for further railway construction towards the Afghan frontier will receive most careful consideration from the financial and other points of view indicated in the hon. Member's Question.

China and the Tibetan Agreement.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Chinese Government have accorded their adhesion to the Tibetan agreement of September 7th, 1904; and, if so, whether he is in a position to announce the terms of this adhesion.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury) (For Sir EDWARD GREY): The Convention between Great Britain and China which was signed at Peking on April 27th secures the adhesion of China to the Convention established with Thibet in 1904. The text of the Convention has not yet been received, but it will be laid before Parliament in due course. The Convention does not, however, alter the arrangements arrived at under the Convention with Thibet, as confirmed by the Government of India. It contains an engagement on our part not to encroach on Thibetan territory, nor to interfere in the government of Thibet, the Government of China undertaking not to allow any foreign State to interfere in the government or internal administration of Thibet. It also states that we do not seek for ourselves any of the concessions mentioned in Article IX. of the Convention with Thibet which were denied to any other State or to the subjects of any other State. The Convention with China does not alter the amount of the Thibetan indemnity in any way.

Pentonville Warders Grievances.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that on the visit of His Majesty's Inspector of Prisons to Pentonville on the 7th and 8th of February last an entry was made in the inspector's minute book that no officers fell out of the ranks to make complaints, and that such entry was endorsed by the governor of the prison; and whether, seeing that some twelve or thirteen officers so fell out and preferred complaints, he will say what he proposes to do in the matter.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): The facts are as stated in the hon. Member's Question, except that as I understand only six officers fell out, and that the governor of a prison does not endorse entries in the inspector's book, but merely notes any instructions it may contain. The explanation is that the inspector was specially engaged during the afternoon of this day on a Committee which was sitting at Pentonville to inquire into certain matters relating to the prisoners' clothing and property. The chief warder accordingly was not able to communicate to the inspector that certain officers desired to see him, until 5.30 p.m. In the meantime the inspector, not being aware that any officer desired to see him, had made the entry in the book referred to. He saw the officers immediately, but by inadvertence omitted to delete the original entry in the book. The inspector acquainted the Commissioners on the following day that certain officers had made representations to him on the subject of their hours of duty, etc.

The Invasion of Continental Gipsies.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that a band of about fifty-four German gipsies arrived by different steamers at Leith on April 2nd, distributed in such numbers in each vessel as to evade the regulations of The Aliens Act, 1905, as amended by him, and under which the number of steerage passengers necessary to constitute a vessel an immigrant ship was raised from twelve to twenty; whether a similar band of gipsies, numbering twenty-six, reached West Hartlepool about April 26th, and were refused permission to land under the Act; whether, seeing that the arrival of gipsies has caused uneasiness to the inhabitants of those counties of Scotland through which they have been wandering for the past few weeks, he will say whether constables have been obliged to be on duty day and night to watch these gipsies and escort them from county to county; and whether the Government propose to take any, and, if so, what steps to bring undesirable immigrants of this class under the provisions of the Act. The hon. Gentleman, in putting the Question, said several points were answered on the previous day, and he would only trouble the right hon. Gentleman with the fresh points.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 771.

*MR. GLADSTONE: It is the fact that on or about the date mentioned and since then several parties of aliens, known as German gipsies, have arrived at Leith and elsewhere. They have come in numbers not exceeding twenty, and on non-immigrant ships, so that they are not subject to inspection under the Act. A party of alien passengers believed to be of the same character and numbering twenty-six also arrived on April 26th at West Hartlepool, and were not permitted to land, as that is not an immigration port. As regards the fact that those of the gipsies who have landed in Scotland appear to have taken care to evade the provisions of the Act by coming in parties nor exceeding twenty, I may point out that the same evasion was possible, with only a little more trouble, when the number was fixed at twelve. I have set on foot inquiries into this matter, and when I have obtained full information I shall consider without delay what steps, if any, it may be necessary for me to take for the purpose of restricting the further arrival of such aliens. As regards the measures taken for dealing with those of them who have already landed in this country, I would refer to the Answer to a similar Question which was given yesterday by my right hon. friend the Secretary for Scotland.

MR. COCHRANE: Then steps will be taken to prevent an evasion of the intentions of the Act?

*MR. GLADSTONE: When I have ascertained the facts I will answer that Question.

Dangerous Trades—Home Office Rules.

MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he could see his way to lay upon the Table a Statement showing to which dangerous trades rules and regulations have been applied by the Home Office.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; I shall be happy to do so, and I hope at the same time to furnish information showing what is the present position with regard to each of the trades which have formed the subject of an inquiry.

Aliens Act.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he proposes to move any amendments on the Committee stage of the Aliens Bill.

*MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Goods Porters.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): On behalf of the hon. Member for Derby I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has now received the Return of the number of hours worked by the goods porters employed by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, at Goole, during the months of October, November, and December, 1905; and, if so, will he publish it.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): The Board of Trade expect to hear from the Company in a few days.

Hours of Work of Railway Signalmen.

MR. HUDSON: On behalf of the hon. Member for Derby I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will call for a Return of the number of instances on which eight and ten hours signalmen on the railways of the United Kingdom have been called upon to work more than eight and ten hours, and how many hours per shift, respectively, during the month of February last.

*MR. KEARLEY: Yes, Sir. The Board of Trade will take steps to obtain a Return of the nature desired by my hon. friend.

Small Dwellings Act.

*MR. SEARS (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the total number of advances made by local authorities under the Small Dwellings Act, 1899, to the present time, distinguishing between those in the county of London and the rest of the kingdom.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): As regards London, I am informed that the total number of advances made by the County Council under the Act up to the end of 1905 was ten. Advances have, I believe, also been made by some of the Metropoltitan Borough Councils, but I do not know the number. As regards England and Wales, excluding London, the only information in my possession relates to cases of application by local authorities to the Local Government Board for sanction to loans under the Act. The total number of these applications up to the end of 1905 was ninety-seven.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich) asked whether the Act had done much to prevent overcrowding.

MR. BURNS: From these figures I should say not.

Street Improvements in Newcastle-on-Tyne.

MR. HUDSON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has seen the Report of the inquiry held by Mr. H. Percy Boulnois, M.I.C.E., Inspector of the Department, into an application made by the City Council of Newcastle-on-Tyne for leave to borrow £7,665 for works of street improvements, wherein the said inspector stated that the Board would not sanction the loan if the corporation regular staff were to be employed on the work, but if special men were employed for the purpose the loan might be granted; and can he state the reason of this order, if such order has been given.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: The view taken by the Local Government Board is that the wages of workmen permanently employed by a local authority should not be paid out of borrowed money, and consequently it is their practice to exclude from the amount to be borrowed for works proposed to be executed by the authority any sums which would be paid in respect of such wages. In the present instance, I understand from the inspector's Report that he thinks that each of the intended works will be carried out by gangs specially employed for the purpose. If this course is adopted, there will be no objection to including their remuneration in the loan.

MR. HUDSON: Will this rule in any way prevent municipal corporations from doing their own work?

*MR. JOHN BURNS: Certainly not. It is drawn up in the interest of sound equitable finance.

Provincial Postmen's Allowances.

MR. CLYNES (Manchester, N. E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that an official promise was made in March, 1905, to pay special allowances, not exceeding 3s. per week, to provincial postmen for performing various mail bag night duties, and that these allowances have not yet been paid to a number of men who have been performing the specified duties since April of last year; and, if so, will steps be taken to pay the allowance to the men concerned from the time they have performed the duties.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I am aware of the promise referred to, and in the majority of cases the allowances are now being paid. In those cases which are still under consideration the allowances, when granted, will of course date from April 1st, 1905.

Education Question—Column B. of the Register.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, what compensation, if any, will be afforded to those students who have incurred expense and have deferred the commencement of their professional career with a view to qualifying for a place on Column B. of the Register, which is now to be abolished.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): The Board are prepared, on the abolition of the Register, to take steps to repay the fees paid by students for registration. The additional attainments obtained by students with a view to qualifying for a place on Column B. of the Register are, I should have thought, likely to be equally valuable to them in their professional career, even though the Register is abolished, and I do not consider that any compensation is due to them.

Secondary School Teachers.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, whether he has considered the probable effect upon the secondary training colleges of the proposed abolition of the Register, and the consequent withdrawal of the inducement which the Register offered to those who intend to teach in secondary schools to undergo a course of training for their profession; and whether he proposes to take any steps to encourage such training.

MR. BIRRELL: The Board of Education have considered what effects the proposed abolition of the Register is likely to have upon the existing schemes of training for secondary school teachers, and they are proposing to take steps which they believe will be effective in encouraging the continuance and further development of such schemes.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the entries both for secondary training colleges and diplomas were already diminished in number in consequence of the proposal.

MR. BIRRELL: I was not aware of that fact.

School Endowment.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I wish to ask the President of the Board of Education, if he will state how many endowments were inquired into and dealt with by the Endowed Schools Commission before that body ceased to exist; what was the total value of the endowments dealt with; and how were the funds appropriated.

MR. BIRRELL: The powers and jurisdiction of the Endowed Schools Commission have been taken over by the Board of Education, and the work formerly carried on by that Commission has been continued without a break, so that the hon. Member's Question practically amounts to an inquiry as to the total amount of endowments which can be held to have been, or to be, subject to the operation of the Endowed Schools Acts. It has been estimated that the total annual income from such endowments is somewhere about £735,000. It is impossible to state in answer to a Question how such part of these funds as have been dealt with under the Endowed Schools Acts have been allocated, whether by the Endowed Schools Commission or this Board, as the schemes under which they have been allotted number several thousands and have every variety of purpose.

Non-provided Schools and the Four-fifths Clause.

MR. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R Barkston Ash): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education how many non-provided schools would be in a position, owing to local conditions of population, to take advantage of the four-fifths Clause of the Education Bill, and how many, owing to the 5,000 limit, would be precluded from taking advantage of such facilities.

MR. BIRRELL: I have nothing as yet to add to the Answer which I gave to a Question on this subject on Monday last from the hon. Member for South Hants,† but I hope to be able to supply the figures at the end of the week.

Vaccination of Teachers.

MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he is now in a position to state whether he can allow local education authorities to use their discretion regarding the vaccination of teachers.

MR. BIRRELL: I am proposing to insert in the Board's Regulations a provision under which vaccination will not, so far as the Board are concerned, be required of any intending teacher who may state to the Board when applying for recognition that he has conscientious objections to being vaccinated. It will rest with the local authority to decide in each case whether they shall employ such a teacher. The Board will keep a record of any teachers who have not been vaccinated.

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† See Col. 246.

MR. ADKINS (Lancashire, Middleton) asked whether the same discretion would be given to local authorities in respect of pupil teachers entering training colleges within the area of such authorities.

MR. BIRRELL said he thought that was the intention.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): Does a similar discretion exist in any other civilised country in the world?

MR. BIRRELL: I am not a judge of civilisation.

Secondary School Capitation Grants.

MR. W. JOHNSON (Warwickshire, Nuneaton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether any of the head-masters or head-mistresses of the centres or secondary schools in which pupil teachers and probationers are instructed receive capitation fees on such pupils; and if so, whether, in view of the Regulations for the Instruction and Training of Pupil Teachers, Articles 15 (3) and 23, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. BIRRELL: I understand that in many secondary schools in which pupil teachers and probationers are instructed the head-teachers are paid partly by a fixed salary and partly by a capitation grant, in respect of each scholar or pupil teacher admitted. This course does not appear to be contrary to any of the provisions of Section 15 of the Regulations for the Instruction and Training of Pupil Teachers. But if the hon. Member has any particular case in which he believes irregularities exist, I will have it investigated if he will communicate it to me.

Fees for Swearing-in Magistrates.

MR. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford): To ask Mr. Attorney-General whether any county or borough official is entitled to ask for any payment from a person appointed to be a justice of the peace therein; and, if so, what is the scale of payments, and for what service.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields): Clerks of the Peace can charge fees for administering oaths to justices on appointment. A fee of £2, to be reduced to 5 shillings in the case of an ex-officio justice, is the amount suggested in the model table recommended by the Home Office, but it is impossible to say what is the fee customarily charged.

Sewage Farms and Fruit Culture.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether any action has been taken, or is contemplated, with reference to the recommendation of the Departmental Committee on the fruit industry that an inquiry should be instituted into the alleged practice of growing fruit on sewage farms, and the effect of such a practice on the public health.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): We have been in communication with the Local Government Board on this subject, and we are informed that no instance of disease attributed to fruit grown on sewage farms is known in the Medical Department of the Board. The information in the possession of the Board indicates that fruit is very seldom grown on sewage farms in this country, and there is no confirmation of the suggestion that injury to health is caused by fruit so grown.

Cattle Diseases in Argentina and the United States.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether pleuro-pneumonia and foot-and-mouth disease are at present rife in Argentina and the United States of America; and, if so, whether the Board of Agriculture intends to prohibit the landing of cattle from America for slaughter at the ports.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: We have no information that pleuro-pneumonia is prevalent either in Argentina or the United States. Foot-and-mouth disease is known to be prevalent in Argentina, but no case has been reported from the United States since 1903. The importation of cattle from Argentina is already prohibited, but similar action is not necessary in the case of cattle from the United States.

The Zoological Gardens.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the acreage of land covered by the Zoological Gardens; what is the rent paid to the Government for its use; and what is the estimated rent which would be procurable for the same if offered in the open market.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The acreage of the Gardens is approximately 30½ acres and the rent paid to the Commissioners of Woods is £358 0s. 9d. I have no means of estimating what rent would be procurable in the open market.

MR. SEAVERNS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if, in view of the smallness of the rent which the proprietors of the Zoological Gardens pay to the Government for the use of the land occupied by them, he will suggest to them the propriety of opening the Gardens to the public during certain hours in the week, preferably on Sundays, either without charge or at a nominal charge for admittance, so that the educational advantages of the Gardens may be more generally enjoyed than at present.

MR. MCKENNA: I do not think under all the circumstances that the course proposed would be at all desirable. The ordinary charge for admission to the Zoological Gardens is 1s. for adults and 6d. for children, but on Mondays throughout the year, on four days at Easter and again at Whitsuntide, and on two days at Christmas the charge is only 6d. Specially reduced rates are given throughout the year to excursion and school parties, whilst children from the public elementary schools, in charge of their teachers, are admitted on five mornings in each week at the rate of 1d.

MR. SEAVERNS: Has the Secretary to the Treasury been in communication with the Society?

MR. MCKENNA: Yes, Sir.

MR. WARDLE: How long is it since the rent was fixed?

MR. MCKENNA: I must ask for notice of that.

Ex-Cabinet Ministers' Pensions.

MR. G. H. FABER (Boston): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state under what circumstances pensions are granted to ex-Cabinet Ministers, with the names of the present recipients and the amounts they individually receive.

MR. MCKENNA: The First Lord has asked me to reply to this Question. These pensions are granted in accordance with the provisions of the Political Offices Pension Act, 1869 (32 and 33 Vict., cap. 60). The particulars asked for in the latter part of the Question are as follows:—First-class.—The right hon. Viscount Cross, £2,000; the right hon. Lord George Hamilton, £2,000. Second-class.—The right hon. Henry Chaplin, £1,200; the right hon. Sir John E. Gorst, £1,200; the right hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, £1,200; the right hon. Gerald W. Balfour, £1,200.

Appropriation of Charity Funds.

MR. CREMER: I wish to ask the hon. Member for the Elland Division, as representing the Charity Commissioners, if he can state the number of charities and endowments which have been inquired into by the Charity Commissioners; what is the total value of the charities and endowments which have been inquired into; how the funds have been appropriated; the number of charities and endowments which, in the opinion of the Charity Commissioners, remain to be investigated; and how long they calculate it will be before their labours terminate.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): Under the Endowed Schools Acts, since 1901 only exceptional cases can be dealt with by the Commissioners. The jurisdiction under the Charitable Trusts Acts is not, as the hon. Member is aware, of a terminable character. It is not possible to give the information desired as to number of inquiries and particulars of Endowments, since this would in fact involve an epitome of the labours of the Commissioners during half a century; but the Index recently prepared, referred to in their current Report, records upwards of 15,000 schemes, showing in each case the place, name of endowment, date of scheme, and Act conferring jurisdiction.

MR. CREMER: I want to know how the money has been appropriated. Is the hon. Gentleman aware there is a strong feeling among the people that endowments appropriated by the Charity Commissioners have been taken from the poor and utilised for purposes not of the general profit?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have said that the information may be obtained on reference to the records.

Stornoway Fisheries.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state what housing accommodation is provided at Stornoway for the influx of girls specially engaged on work in connection with the fishings, during the herring fishing season; and will steps be taken to prevent overcrowding in the sleeping rooms.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): This matter has been under observation since 1899, and it is reported that the by-laws as to houses let in lodgings have been more strictly enforced and overcrowding has been diminished. The Local Government Board for Scotland has now issued a circular to thirty-four different Burgh and District Local Authorities, including the Burgh of Stornoway, asking that a special inspection be made when the fishing season is at its height in the respective localities and a report sent to them.

Fishery Cruiser "Norna."

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, having regard to the fact that the Fishery Board cruiser "Norna" was sold, on the ground that she was unsuitable for the service, will he state how the sum of £550 derived from her sale has been disposed of.

MR. SINCLAIR: The sum derived from the sale of the Fishery Board cruiser "Norna" was placed to the credit of the Marine Deposit Account.

Lewis Industrial Training Grants.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state what sum it is proposed to expend out of the General Aid Grant, under Section I., Sub-section D, of the Education (Scotland) Minute of March 19th last, in providing industrial training to boys and girls resident in the Island of Lewis, and, seeing that the Minute has only recently been issued, will he state why the period within which applications under this section must be lodged is limited to May 1st; and whether he can see his way to have the time extended.

MR. SINCLAIR: The amount of grant to be allocated under Section I. D. of the Minute of March 19th last cannot be determined till all the applications under this section of the Minute have been received and considered. As any balance of the Vote remaining at March 31st, 1907, must be surrendered, it is important that applications for a share in the grant should be made at as early a date as possible, but applications received after May 1st will be considered if reasonable cause for the delay is shown.

Scottish Teachers—Training Regulations.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland have been consulted in the framing of the draft regulations for the training of teachers which are, it is understood, shortly to be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. SINCLAIR: The draft regulations referred to, should they be laid on the Table of the House, will be so laid by the authority and direction, properly signified, of the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland.

Constable Anderson, Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now in a position to state under what circumstances Constable Anderson, formerly of Kiltimagh, county Mayo, was recently removed from county Tyrone to county Meath.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): It would be contrary to practice and undesirable, for disciplinary and other reasons, to disclose the circumstances in which a constable is transferred from one district to another.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether, as a matter of fact, charges similar to those which caused this constable's removal from another place were the cause of this removal?

Mr. BRYCE: I have no knowledge of that.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Is it not the fact that on the occasion of his last removal efforts were made to prove that he was persecuted on account of religion? Cannot the right hon. Gentleman tell us something about the latest performances of this Gay Lothario?

Mr. BRYCE: I think the time has come when what happened years ago might well be dropped.

Irish Evicted Tenants.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any special extra staff of inspectors, in connection with the work of reinstating evicted tenants in Ireland, has been sanctioned by the Treasury; and, if not, will he explain why; and whether the Irish Government intend to take any steps to expedite the work of reinstating evicted tenants.

Mr. BRYCE: The Treasury have sanctioned the employment of six assistant inspectors for the purpose of inquiring into the cases of evicted tenants, and the necessary appointments will be made with the least possible delay.

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of evicted tenants reinstated in their old holdings, and the number placed in new farms, since January 1st, 1906, and the amount of money which has been issued by way of free grant, and of loan, respectively, in connection with those cases of reinstatement.

Mr. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners estimate, from the information available to them, that 101 evicted tenants were reinstated in their former holdings between January 1st and March 31st, 1906. In addition, one evicted tenant was provided with a new holding. Free grants, amounting to £525, and advances for improvements, amounting to £100, have been issued, or are in course of issue, in connection with the reinstatement of these evicted tenants. It is hoped that proceedings will now be sensibly accelerated.

Mr. DILLON: Were any of these evicted tenants re-instated by the landlords, or all through the agency of the Estates Commissioners?

Mr. BRYCE: Judging from the information supplied me, they were reinstated by the Estates Commissioners. I will, however, inquire if the hon. Member wishes.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): At this rate of progress how many years will it take to settle the evicted tenants' question?

Mr. BRYCE: The hon. Member knows as well as I do that there were causes in existence till lately which prevented progress being made.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): How many of the tenants re-instated immediately sold their holdings?

Mr. BRYCE: I have no information as to that, but I should think it extremely improbable that more than the smallest number did.

Irish Land Advance Inspectors.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will an inspection and comparison be made of the Reports furnished by inspectors on behalf of the Estates Commissioners, with a view to identifying those in whose connection purchasers are now in default discovering substantial differences between the results and those which would have been reached under the present instructions, making amends wherever substantial injustice has been done, and dispensing with the services of inspectors whose Reports led to that injustice.

Mr. BRYCE: I must remind the hon. Member that when once an advance has been made, no alteration in the amount of the annuity can be made on the grounds that the sum advanced is in excess of the value of the holding. The Estates Commissioners, however, inform me that if they should have reason to believe that any serious errors in reporting as to security were attributable to any of their inspectors, they would make such inquiries and take such action as they should consider necessary.

Irish Land Purchase—Sales by Collusion.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will the Estates Commissioners inquire and ascertain all the cases on the estates already sold in which tenancies had been created by collusion between landlord and grazier for the purpose of extracting money under the Land Act of 1903, using up land previously untenanted and thus preventing the distribution of such land, which was one of the purposes of that Act; will the services of any inspector, who by his report facilitated such a transaction, be dispensed with; and what precautions will the Commissioners take to prevent the recurrence of such abuses.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they require the date of the creation of all tenancies created after January 1st, 1901, to be disclosed, and they have exercised and will continue to exercise the discretion given to them by the Act in judging of the bona fides of such tenancies and of the amount of advance which should be made in respect of them. The instructions to inspectors (paragraph 16) require the necessary information to be given as to the wants and circumstances of other persons in the neighbourhood, and the Commissioners are not aware of the occurrence of any such case as is referred to in the Question.

The Sinn Fein Association—Views of Mr. Kelly, J.P.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. P. J. Kelly, J.P., at a meeting of the Kilcreede branch of an association known as the Sinn Fein Association, held for the purpose of honouring and perpetuating the memory of a man named Daly, who was hanged for shooting a land agent, said he was proud to see so many rebel men present to commemorate the anniversary of the execution of the man Daly, and that, after asking the Dublin Castle note-taker to take down carefully what he said, he declared that he and his audience were prepared to act in the same way as Antony Daly; whether, in view of the fact that Mr. Kelly holds His Majesty's commission of the peace, and of the nature of the speech in question, the Government intends to take any action in the matter; and whether he will draw the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the matter, with a view to the removal of Mr. Kelly from the magistracy.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that the meeting in question was held for the purpose of raising funds for placing a tombstone upon the grave of Antony Daly. I have not been able to ascertain the precise offence for which Daly was executed in the year 1820. A newspaper report of the time says it was "for being a Ribbonman," and an official letter described it as being "for an attack on a house." I am informed that it is as a Ribbonman that Daly is locally remembered. I am not aware that any police shorthand note-taker was present on the occasion referred to. As regards the latter part of the Question, the matter lies within the jurisdiction of the Lord Chancellor and not of the Irish Government.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that it is impossible for this House to approach the Lord Chancellor except through the right hon Gentleman?

MR. BRYCE: It is no business of the Irish Government to interfere with the Lord Chancellor's discretion.

Mr. W. Daly's Dunsandle Estate.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the estate of Mr. W. Daly, of Dunsandle, near Loughrea, has been sold to the tenants; that Patrick Carr, a tenant on that estate who took a leading part in the agitation for the sale of the estate, instead of having his former holding sold to him, has been given a large holding on the estate of Captain Cowan, near Eyre Court, county Galway, nearly twenty miles from his former holding; will he explain why was Carr's old holding not sold to him, and on what grounds, and under what authority and in pursuance of what section in the Land Purchase Act of 1903 have the Estates Commissioners acted in selling to him a holding on another estate when it was possible for him to purchase his own holding.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that the estate referred to has been sold to the tenants under an Originating Request lodged with the Estates Commissioners on August 31st, 1905. For the purpose of facilitating the resale and redistribution of the estate, the vendors arranged with Mr. Patrick J. Carr to surrender a holding of 289 acres on the estate on payment to him by the vendors of the sum of £1,000; and this area was purchased by the Estates Commissioners as other lands in the occupation of the vendors, for the purpose of enlarging holdings on the estate. Subsequently an advance for the purchase of a "parcel" on the estate of Stephen J. Cowan, county Galway, was made to Mr. Carr, under the provisions of Section 2, Sub-section (1) (d) of the Act of 1903.

Irish Agricultural Department Contributions to Congested Districts.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of the resolution and correspondence from the County Kerry Joint Technical Instruction Committee, dated February 16th, with reference to the contributions from the Department of Agriculture and the Congested Districts Boards to technical schemes in the congested districts of the county; and whether he will request the Commission of Inquiry into the working of the Department of Agriculture to look closely into this matter, so that effect may be given to the representations which have frequently been made on the subject by the Kerry County Council.

MR. BRYCE: I have received the documents referred to. The Question whether the Committee of Inquiry into the working of the Department will deal with the subject mentioned is one for the discretion of the Committee, to whom any representations on the subject may be addressed, either directly or through the Irish Office.

Irish Department of Agriculture—Return of Local Contributions.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will the Return of local contributions ordered by the House for the purpose of discussion on the Vote for the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in Ireland be ready in time for that purpose; will he explain the reason for delaying or witholding it; and will he say who is responsible for the fact that for more than a fortnight after the House had given the order for this purpose no steps had been taken to prepare the information.

MR. BRYCE: The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction will complete this Return without delay as soon as the necessary information has been received from the local bodies concerned. There is, I am informed, no foundation for the suggestion that the information is being withheld or delayed. The Order of the House reached me on April 6th and I at once forwarded it through my Dublin office to the Department. As soon as the Department were satisfied that the required particulars could not be fully supplied without communicating with the local authorities, circulars were prepared and issued to those bodies on April 14th. Ninety-seven out of the 115 local bodies have supplied the necessary information, and the Department are pressing the remaining eighteen for replies.

Irish Agricultural Inquiry.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the Departmental Inquiry into the working of the Board of Agriculture, whether facilities will be given to professional representatives of the veterinary staff to give evidence.

MR. BRYCE: I have already stated that it was never intended that grievances of members of the staff should be dealt with by the Committee. If the Committee think that evidence as to the working of the Department is needed from the veterinary staff, they will no doubt call for it. I cannot interfere with the discretion of the Committee in the matter.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will consider the advisability of appointing an eminent independent member of the veterinary profession to the Commission of Inquiry into the Department of Agriculture, in view of the importance of the veterinary branch to Ireland and the number of matters of a veterinary nature carried out by the Department generally; and will he instruct that professional officers of the Department are to be called to give evidence before the Commission.

MR. BRYCE: It would not, in my opinion, be desirable now to increase the Committee, which has already begun its work, by appointing a member of the veterinary profession. In reply to the latter part of the Question, I beg to refer to the reply which I have now given to the similar Question of the hon. Member for South Down.

Public Meetings in County Sligo.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a public meeting to denounce a farmer named Cuffe was announced as intended to be held at Camcuill, county Sligo, on April 22nd, and that, although the meeting was prevented by the police from being held at Camcuill, it was in fact held at Dromore West in the neighbourhood, and that two hon. Members of this House attended and spoke at the meeting; will he say whether the Irish Government has a shorthand report of the speeches at the meeting and the language used, inciting outrages towards Cuffe; whether, seeing that the only offence of which Cuffe is alleged to be guilty is that he recently purchased a small estate sold by the devisee in trust, he will say if it has been necessary to afford Cuffe police protection; how many police were employed in preventing the meeting being held at Camcuill; and who is to pay the expense of their employment.

MR. BRYCE: A public meeting was summoned for Camcuill, but the placard convening it contained no reference to the case of Mr. Cuffe. The meeting was, in fact, held at Dromore West. No shorthand report of the speeches made at that place was taken by the police, and the Inspector-General informs me that no speeches inciting to outrage against Mr. Cuffe were delivered. It has not been found necessary to afford police protection to Mr. Cuffe. A force of seventy police was assembled at Camcuill to preserve order and prevent any possible attempt at intimidation. This force was drawn from the county establishment, and no expense, save that of the usual travelling and subsistence allowances, was incurred. This expense will be defrayed from the Constabulary Vote.

Dr. Ellis's Copyrighted Books.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Dr. Ellis, Local Government Board Auditor, has copyrighted books, forms, and ledgers, which are used by public bodies under the jurisdiction of the Local Government Board in Ireland; whether he derives any, and, if so, what, profit from the sale of such books, forms, and ledgers; and whether the books, forms, and ledgers were devised by Dr. Ellis.

MR. BRYCE: The Local Government Board have no knowledge that Dr. Ellis, or any other member of their audit staff, has copyrighted any such books and forms as are referred to. The forms of account prescribed by the Board have not been copyrighted, and there is no obligation on local bodies to use any other books or forms of account. The system of book-keeping prescribed for local authorities was not devised by Dr. Ellis, but by the Local Government Board with the assistance of their audit staff generally.

MR. MACVEAGH: Has the right hon. Gentleman's attention been called to an advertisement published by a Dublin firm in which they speak of Dr. Ellis's copyrighted books now used by almost every public body in Ireland? Is the official who supplied this Answer the one who told the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor that these books never were copyrighted?

MR. BRYCE: I cannot say. I know nothing of the advertisement.

Discretion of Estates Commissioners.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if he will explain how the statement of the Estates Commissioners that they can exercise no discretion as regards price in cases of sale within the zones is to be reconciled with the decision in the Blake-Foster case, which was to the effect that they did possess and had properly exercised such a discretion; and will the Commissioners be instructed to apply the rule in that case to all cases of excessive price and of *mala fides*.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): The decision in the case of the Blake-Foster Estate established only that the Estates Commissioners were entitled to refuse to declare any particular lands an estate on the ground that the annuities on advances for the purchase of holdings proposed to be comprised in the estate could not be duly paid, or on the ground that the holdings were congested and required improvement, and that the boundaries were confused. If, however, a holding, under a judicial tenancy is included in lands declared by the Commissioners to be an estate for the purpose of the Act, then, provided the price comes within the zones, the Commissioners hold that they have no discretion as to the price and are bound to make the advance.

Irish Poor Rate Collectors.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland under what statutory authority the Local Government Board claim to have the power to prescribe disqualifications for poor rate collectors in Irish counties; and whether such power has been conferred on them by statute.

MR. CHERRY: The Local Government Board claim to have power to prescribe the qualifications for poor rate collectors in Irish counties under Sections 31, 32, 33, 73, and 94 of the Poor Relief (Ireland) Act 1838, and Section 83 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act 1898. The qualifications are prescribed by Article 86 of a general order issued by the Board on December 17th, 1904.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the latter part of the Question.

MR. CHERRY: That is a legal Question I am not prepared to Answer without longer notice?

MR. DILLON: Then I give a week's notice.

Irish Land Purchase—Treasury Interventions.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland does the Treasury intervene in cases under the Land Act of 1903 only in opposition to the State and in the interests of the landlords; is the jurisdiction of the Treasury ousted by collusion between a landlord and his tenants for the purpose of extracting public money from a State Department; has the attention of the Treasury been directed to the fact that public money is now being advanced indiscriminately to buy from landlords the occupation, interest, and permanent improvements which are, in law and in equity, the property of the tenant; will he explain why no action has yet been taken to reverse the decision in King-Harman and Hayes, in which a woman, under landlord influence, bought with public money houses certified by the Estates Commissioners to have been already her own property; are the Estates Commissioners bound by that decision; are they applying it in other cases; and is it proposed, by appeal or by legislation, to protect purchasers and the State from the consequences of paying public money for property which belongs not to the so-called vendors but to the so-called purchasers.

In putting the Question, the hon. Member asked Mr. SPEAKER if he could rule that it should be answered by the Irish Minister to whom it was addressed, instead of by an English Minister dependent on an Irish official for the necessary information.

*MR. SPEAKER: I am afraid I cannot answer that, but I am sure the hon. Gentleman will receive a satisfactory Answer by whomsoever the Question may be answered.

MR. GINNELL: Then I respectfully address the Question to the Attorney-General for Ireland.

MR. McKENNA: My right hon. friend has asked me to reply, but of course if the hon. Member does not wish for the Answer I will not give it.

MR. GINNELL: Let me have the Answer, please.

MR. MCKENNA: There is, of course, no foundation for the imputation contained in the first part of the hon. Member's Question. The entire Question appears to turn upon the decision in the case referred to—King-Harman and Hayes—in which the Treasury were not parties or represented in any way, and to imply that in this case there was collusion between vendor and purchaser with the object of extracting public money. In view of the finding of the Judicial Commissioner that there was no suspicion of fraud in this case, and that there was sufficient security for the advance, there was no ground for the intervention of the Treasury and I see no reason for any action on the part of the Department. With reference to the fifth and sixth Questions, I assume that the Estates Commissioners are bound by all judicial decisions. I have no information as to whether they are applying the decision referred to in other cases.

MR. GINNELL: How does the hon. Gentleman defend what in ordinary business would be a gross sale to a woman of rights which already belonged to her.

MR. MCKENNA: The Treasury act under statute, and having no power to go outside, they were satisfied that the property in question was sufficient security for the amount advanced.

MR. GINNELL: Why do the Treasury interfere as against tenants and not as against landlords?

MR. MCKENNA: I have nothing to add to my Answers.

Trade Disputes Bill.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can inform the House what Amendments the Government intend to propose in Clause 4 of the Trade Disputes Bill; and, if not, when this information will be forthcoming.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): When the Committee stage is reached the House will be in possession of the proposals of the Government.

Ecclesiastical Discipline Commission.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state when the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline will be able to issue their Report.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Report of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline in the Church of England, and the print of the evidence taken by them, will be ready for and distributed to Members in time to be considered before the discussions on the Education Bill are taken either on the Second Reading or in Committee.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no further information since the 22nd of February, † when I stated that I understood from the Chairman of the Commission that the Report would probably be completed by Whitsuntide; and I need hardly remind the hon. Member that the Government have no control over the proceedings of a Royal Commission.

MR. SLOAN: Has any inquiry been made since this Question was placed on the Paper?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, I do not think so in view of inquiry having so recently been made of the Chairman of the Commission.

San Franciscan Disaster.

MR. SEAVERNS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the unprecedented character of the disaster which, at San Francisco, has fallen upon a nation closely allied to us by ties of common interest and friendship, he will grant facilities for the passage of a Resolution expressing the deep sympathy of the Members of this House with the people of the United States in their misfortune.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 519.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Government at once conveyed officially their deep regret and sympathy when this calamity occurred, thereby giving expression to the universal feeling in this country. It is not customary for the House to pass such a Resolution as my hon. friend suggests.

British Shipping—War Guarantee

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if it is the intention of the Government to appoint a Committee at an early date to investigate the question of a national guarantee for British shipping in war.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, Sir, a Committee to consider this Question is in process of formation, and an announcement as to its composition and the terms of reference will shortly be made.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION [EXPENSES].

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration and expenses incurred under any Act of the present session to consolidate and amend the Law with respect to Compensation to Workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment, and of Compensation to Workmen employed by or under the Crown in pursuance of such act (King's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

SELECTION [STANDING COMMITTEES].

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Mr. Ellis Griffith and Mr. Lehmann; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Mond and Mr. Spicer.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Sir Francis Lowe and Mr. Flynn: and had appointed in substitution:—Mr. F. E. Smith and Mr. Edward Dunn.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Bill:—Mr. Swift MacNeill: and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Havelock Wilson.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

ELECTRIC POWER AND SUPPLY BILLS.

Ordered, That the Memorandum by the Commissioners of Works on Electric Power and Supply Bills be referred to the Committees on the St. Pancras Electricity Bill, the Twickenham and Teddington Electric Supply Bill, the London Southern Tramways Bill, and the Edinburgh Corporation Bill.—(*Mr. Harcourt.*)

NEW BILL.

INDIAN RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Indian Railways Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Ellis; supported by Mr. Secretary Morley; to be read a second time upon Thursday, May 10th, and to be printed. [Bill 186].

PLURAL VOTING.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): It is my duty to ask the leave of the House to introduce, under the Ten Minutes' Rule, a Bill to limit the abuse and anomaly of certain classes of plural voting. In doing so I shall adhere strictly to the imaginary time limit imposed by this non-existent rule, and I will not, therefore, waste precious moments in a superfluous request for that generous indulgence which the House always so readily extends to a new Member making his maiden speech. The prohibition of plural voting has been enforced by Parliament for many years in our municipal and county council elections and also in the Parliamentary register, so far as the duplicate qualifications fell within the same constituency. The Government propose to extend those provisions to the whole country for Parliamentary purposes. If I thought this Bill demanded any apology—which I do not—I should put forward the excuse which you, Sir, dignified by its use from the Chair in defence of a breach of procedure that it is "only a little one." I do not wish specially to minimise this Bill, because *de minimis non curat lex*, and I hope in future the law will have much care of this very necessary and desirable amendment to it. But though happily and conveniently diminutive in form, it will, I hope, be extensive in effect; and I think, perhaps, its value will be in inverse ratio to its size. It does not aim at one vote one value, because it is not a redistribution Bill, but it does secure one man one value. It does not give to every man a vote, because it is not a franchise Bill, but it secures that one man shall exercise one vote only. It is not an enfranchising and not a disfranchising Bill. [AN HON. MEMBER: Surely.] No, because it leaves to every man all the qualifications which he at present possesses all over the country, though it limits the caprice and redundancy of their exercise. It removes that multiplication of electoral power which comes from the geographical distribution of real estate, and sometimes from the vagaries of boundary commissioners operating upon small areas. The scandal has become more obvious and more intolerable since the Redistribution Act of 1884, when the counties were parcelled out into smaller divisions. If we ever come to equal electoral districts with even more fanciful boundaries, the anomaly will be more glaring and more unjustifiable. This Bill does not abolish the property qualification, though much might be said for such a method of procedure. I personally should advocate it in any comprehensive scheme of general reform, because I believe—though here I speak only for myself—that the franchise is really and rightly founded upon manhood and not upon property, and I regard residence and ownership as only convenient methods of identification and localisation. But this Bill is only an Amendment and an extension of the existing machinery of the electoral law. Under the present system a voter with duplicate qualifications in the same borough or county division is forbidden by law to exercise more than one of them at a time. The Government desire to extend those provisions to the country as a whole. We propose to make it a similar offence to do in other boroughs and in other county divisions what it is now illegal to do in one. The most effective method, no doubt, of carrying this out, would have been to say that the plural voter, after selecting a locality for the exercise of his vote, should be starred or put in division 3, or on the parochial electors' list, or omitted altogether from the register in the non-selected districts where he has a duplicate qualification But there are two obvious objection to that course. First of all, it would entail a great deal of labour and confusion in the intercommunication of the registration officials all over the country, or in the alternative it would compel the plural voter to take a considerable amount of trouble to divest himself of his redundant qualifications. We do not feel it is either necessary or just to ask this of him. But we do ask of him, and we think we have a right to demand, that he should select once a year, or if indolent or satisfied with the selection, once for life, which of his several votes he will exercise during the ensuing calendar year, and, unless subsequently cancelled by the voter himself, that selection will continue in operation in future years. On receipt of notice from the voter by the proper electoral authorities, he will be marked by some distinguishing letter or symbol in the margin of the register in the selected constituency, as is at present done with duplicate qualifications in the same constituency. We leave the plural voter on the register in all Parliamentary constituencies where he at present has a qualification, but without the distinctive mark which alone entitles him to record his vote. The object of this is that the voter, having the right to vary his selection once a year, should not be put to the risk or trouble of having to reclaim for his vote in a district where he already possesses a qualification and to which he may wish subsequently to transfer his voting power. All that has to be done by this individual is this; I will take myself as an example; I assume that I am marked to vote in the register for St. George's, Hanover Square. If I wish to change my place of voting, I notify in proper time the authorities at St. George's that I wish no longer to remain a constituent of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite. In that case the distinctive mark would be deleted from my name there. At the same time I should inform the authorities in South Oxfordshire that in future I wished to vote there, and I should at the proper time acquire in that division the effective symbol in the margin of the register. The method presents no difficulty to any plural voter who is not an illiterate or who cannot once in his life afford a penny stamp. To the property owner who cares so little for his constitutional rights that he omits to make any selection it is possible that this Bill may mean a temporary disfranchisement; but their number is likely to be very few. I do not think they will command much sympathy, and in any case their number is likely to be rapidly reduced by the activity and omniscience of those party agents to whom most of us owe our presence in this House. The difference in the currency of the register in England and Scotland presents a slight difficulty; the method of its solution will be better understood when hon. Members see the text of the Bill. I hope the time may be very near when England and Ireland will assimilate their electoral practice with that of Scotland, and bring into operation on November 1st for all purposes the register which is already in existence at that date throughout the United Kingdom. It is provided in the schedule of this Bill that a question may be put in the polling booth to any suspect voter; and it is also provided, in accordance with the present law, that to ask for a ballot paper without a title to vote shall be regarded as a corrupt practice. Under the Ballot Act of 1872 the attempt to vote or the act of voting twice in the same constituency is treated as personation. We apply the same provision and the same penalty to the attempt to vote elsewhere than in the selected constituency. I know the Bill will not secure the universal assent of the House, and I dare say there are some Members opposite who will wish to misquote some early lines of the Duke of Rutland—

> "Let wealth and commerce, laws and
> learning, die;
> But leave us still our old mobility."

This, with the help of the House, the Government do not intend to do. The time has gone by when the pluralist can command the pity of the public. If he receives common justice in the ease of selection amongst the superfluity of his qualifications, he will have neither ground for sympathy nor cause for complaint. In moving for leave to introduce this Bill I do so in the belief that it will secure a more equable and a more equitable representation of the people as a whole, and that it will remedy the over representation of certain classes, arising not from the amount or the value of their property, but from the geographical accident of its distribution. I beg to move.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to impose a penalty on a Parliamentary elector, registered in more than one constituency, who votes in any constituency except that selected for the purpose"—(*Mr. Harcourt.*)

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): This Ten Minutes' Rule has of late years shown itself of a somewhat elastic character, but I venture to think no more startling development of it has ever taken place than the introduction of this Bill under it. I should have thought that a measure of this vast constitutional importance, which not merely affects the present distribution of political power but goes to the very root and foundation of our electoral system, would have been introduced by the Prime Minister, with all the pomp and circumstance of a First Reading debate. But we have it brought in by the First Commissioner of Works under the Ten Minutes' Rule. I say that it not merely affects the present distribution of power but it affects also the very root of our system of representation. What has that been in the past? You may found your representation on interest, class, ideas, localities or numbers. Our system has always been the representation of locality. That principle has been observed throughout the various changes of the franchise and of the distribution of power which have taken place during the nineteenth century, and it naturally follows that if a man has a substantial interest in two localities he has a right to a vote in each. That view has never been departed from in the successive changes of our system, and I venture to say that, looked at from that point of view, the right hon. Gentleman's analogy of municipal government and of the municipal voter wholly falls to the ground. Moreover, there have been from time to time efforts to secure the representation of minorities—to ensure that this House is, what I do not think it is at present, a true representation of the conditions of political opinion throughout the country. Mr. Gladstone, by a process of reasoning which I have never been able to follow, thought that single member constituencies would promote the representation of minorities. That has not been the effect, but at any rate, this measure, whatever else it is worth, will absolutely kill any possibility of the representation of minorities throughout the country. It involves a departure from the system of local representation and an adoption of the system of purely numerical representation. Henceforward neither localities nor the men interested in localities, nor the interests of localities, are to be considered, but the mere number of the voters in these localities, and the logical result is equal electoral districts. The right hon. Gentleman said he proposed to give one man one vote, and he was bold enough to say that there followed from that the result that each man's vote would have one value. But it is not the same value. The value of the individual voter in certain of the small constituencies of the United Kingdom is very different from the value of the individual voter in some of the overgrown constituencies in certain of the crowded parts of the country. If this measure is to be seriously considered in this House it should be considered as part of a larger scheme of redistribution of seats, and the redressing of all existing inequalities—as part practically of a scheme of equal electoral districts, which can be adjusted from time to time in accordance with the shifting of population. I will not go into the question of machinery, with which the right hon. Gentleman dealt no doubt with clearness, but not for the purposes of this debate in a manner which affects our action on this side of the House. The real question we have to consider is the question of principle. Are we going to accept, without hesitation and without a division a proposal to recast our whole electoral system, to say nothing of the immediate change in the existing distribution of political power? This we cannot do, and under the circumstances we shall divide against the Bill, and I think, I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that in its subsequent stages it will be carefully considered, if not seriously opposed.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 327; Noes, 66. (Division List No. 64.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Ambrose, Robert
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert H.
Baker, Joseph A.(Finsbury,E.)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams (Devonp't
Benn,W, (T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordsh'e
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, Sir John T. (Cheshire)
Bryce,Rt. Hn.James (Aberdeen
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T.Glen (Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,EGrinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.

Dolan, Charles Joseph
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Glover, Thomas
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir(MerthyrTydvil
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Holland, Sir Willim Henry
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster)
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Monton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Donc'st'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipper'y Mid.
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, James (Roscom'n, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampt'n)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (B'df'd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott, A. H. (Asht'n-under-L'ne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst

Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (S'thampton
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh.N.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse,SirJT.(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornesy)
Barrie, H.T. (Londonderry,N.)
Beach,Hn.Michael Hugh Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.Victor C.W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim,S
Craig,Captain James (Down,E.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dixon, Sir Daniel
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F. (B'ry S.Edmd.
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.Sir JohnH.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee,ArthurH. (Hants.,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver David (Liverpool)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysay-Thompson, E. C.
Middlemore,John Throgmorton
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, Mafor R. F.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Smith, Abel H. (Hertf'd, East)
Smith, F. E. (Liverp'l, Walton
Starkey, John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Thornton, Percy M.
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. D. Stuart
Younger, George

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Harcourt, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Runciman.

PLURAL VOTING BILL.

"To impose a penalty on a Parliamentary elector, registered in more than one constituency, who votes in any constituency except that selected for the purpose," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 187.]

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That Mr. Nolan be discharged, and Mr. Dolan be added to the Committee.—*Mr.* (*Whiteley.*)

WAYS AND MEANS [1st MAY.]

Resolution reported.

TEA.

"That there shall be charged, on and after the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and six, until the fourteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and seven, in lieu of the duty now payable on tea, the following Customs import duty on tea (that is to say):—

Tea - - the pound, Five-pence."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Rosolution."

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) said that, with respect to the change of date which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced for the coming into force of the new duty, he had been informed that the present proposal was an unusual one. Time had usually been given to enable the trade to settle down to the altered circumstances. He was also informed that under the present arrangement a very grievous injustice might be done to certain persons. Acting on the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Monday, that the new duty would not come into operation until July, dealers and others who required to hold considerable stocks proceeded on Tuesday to clear their stocks in bond. Then it was decided that the duty should come into force on May 14th. Clearly that involved a considerable injustice to those who had acted on the faith of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement. The case could easily be met by a drawback, and no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would make arrangements of that kind.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.) said that the change of date was made because fuller information showed that the earlier date was more convenient to the trade, some branches of which would have been hampered and even paralysed if the operation of the new duty had been delayed until July. It was not a new practice to fix an early date. On the contrary, the practice of postponing the operation of a new duty was a recent usage. As to the hardship mentioned by the rght hon. Gentleman, the dealers who cleared their stocks on Tuesday had evidently abstained from doing so earlier in anticipation of some change in the duty. While that was a natural and legitimate thing to do, it did not give rise to a serious case of hardship, though it afforded ground for inquiry. He had himself inquired into a considerable number of cases brought to his notice, and his advisers had been in communication with the leading representatives of the trade. Steps would be taken to prevent any hardship resulting from the declaration made by him on Monday.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Gentlemen appointed to bring in a Bill upon the Resolutions reported from the Committee of Ways and Means on the 1st day of this instant May, and then agreed to by the House, that they do make provision therein pursuant to the said Resolution—(*Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer*).

FINANCE BILL.

"To grant certain duties of Customs and Inland Revenue, to alter other duties, and to amend the Law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue and the National Debt, and to make other provisions for the financial arrangements of the year," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 188].

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE (No. 2) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clause 4:—

Motion made, Question proposed, "That Clause 4 stand part of the Bill."

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said he desired to point out in regard to this clause that it seemed to him a great constitutional difficulty was bound to arise if this Bill applied to Scotland. The Solicitor-General was no doubt aware that in Scotland in the issue of Commissioners of the Peace there were invariably included certain Privy Councillors, the Lord-Advocate, the Solicitor-General for Scotland, the Senators of the College of Justice and the sheriffs. The Senators of the College of Justice and the sheriffs were irremovable from their positions upon any account whatever save fault or misdemeanour of their own. This clause proposed that justices of the peace who held office *ex officio* should be removable by the same authority as the other justices, which meant that they might be removed by the Crown through the exercise of its Commissioners. He suggested that if the Bill were passed into law and was to affect Scotland some constitutional safeguard on the point ought to be inserted.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields) said the Lord Advocate was not present at the moment, but it did not seem to him that any great injustice was likely to be caused, because it would not affect any of the gentlemen named in their offices. It would be in regard to their functions as Justices of the Peace alone that the Bill would affect them. The point, however, might be considered when the Bill got to the other House.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) thought the Question was a much larger one than the few words of the hon. and learned Gentleman would lead them to suppose. He thought there was a very big constitutional question involved. Under this clause *ex officio* justices, who had been elected to the post of chairman of a district council and other important bodies, were to be removed from the Bench, not necessarily for any statutory offence, but merely upon the *ipse dixit* of the Lord Chancellor. The principles of the Liberal Party appeared to be at stake—if they had any principles left—on this important point. A direct interference was proposed with men elected by the ratepayers to fill certain important posts which carried with them the duties of acting as Justices of the Peace. Were they going in this Bill, without any adequate explanation, to allow a Lord Chancellor to annul the election of the ratepayers without any limitations? A justice so elected might be excluded on mere grounds of caprice. Limiting words, requiring that the justice should be first convicted before he was removed, should certainly be introduced.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs) said he could not see on what principle in the Bill the Lord Chancellor should be allowed to stop the exercise of their jurisdiction as Justices of the Peace by such people as sheriffs in Scotland. It might as well be suggested that the Lord Chancellor should have the same power to stop the excercise of their judicial functions.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said the framers of this clause clearly contemplated that the Lord Chancellor would not exercise this power without good reasons, and he took it the clause got into the Bill largely in consequence of a matter which arose in a certain case where the conduct of a man who was elected mayor became objectionable. It was perfectly evident that he was an unfit person to be either mayor or chairman, or a member of the Bench. His fellow members of the Town Council boycotted him, but had to form a quorum as he had the power to pass resolutions, and he continued to sit on the Bench in spite of everybody. That case had evidently called forth this clause, but in so far as it was framed in a way which apparently gave very arbitrary power to the Lord Chancellor to deprive a Justice of the Peace of his office without any reasonable restrictions, he thought the criticism passed upon the clause was perfectly justified.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (MR. THOMAS SHAW, Hawick Burghs) said he was sorry he was not present when the hon. Member for North West Lanarkshire raised this point. There was, however, nothing specially Scottish about the clause. There was no disqualification. There were not a few officers, notably under the recent Local Government Acts in Scotland, who acted *ex officio* as justices, the most numerous being chairmen of Parish Councils. There might be cases in which it would be expedient that a person of that kind should be excluded from the functions of the justices, and all that was done by the clause was that if such a case arose the powers of the clause could be properly and wisely exercised with the entire consent of the person involved, because it was often a matter of convenience that there should be no exercise of judicial powers in the case of an *ex officio* appointment. There was nothing compulsory in the clause, and he saw no reason to differentiate between England and Scotland.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON said that the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman did not bear exactly on the point to which he had referred, namely, the constitutional point. As the right hon. Gentleman knew, he, in common with the Solicitor-General for Scotland and sundry others, was by virtue of his office a Justice of the Peace for every county in Scotland. While the right hon. Gentleman and the Solicitor-General were removed from the position, no doubt, with their removal from office owing to the demise of their Government, the Senators of the College of Justice were *ex officio* Justices of the Peace whom nothing but death could remove, and it would be committing a breach of constitutional usage to interfere with that privilege.

MR. THOMAS SHAW said he had omitted to mention that the clause originated with the late Lord Chancellor, Lord Halsbury, and therefore might be taken by hon. Members to be perfectly in order. A very exceptional case had been mentioned by his hon. and learned friend, but he might point out that in a short clause of this kind it would be highly inexpedient to provide for exceptional cases.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) said it was perfectly true that this clause was in a Bill which was carried through the House of Lords by the late Lord Chancellor. Its object was to give the Lord Chancellor power to remove justices whose past history in connection with crime or misconduct in office, such as the gratification of personal spite on the Bench, rendered them unfit to be magistrates. His experience at the Home Office showed him that there ought to be a power in the hands of some authority to remove justices. There was an instance of an *ex officio* justice who, if he remembered rightly, was the mayor of a town, and who in the course of an action for slander was proved to have used his official position in order to gratify a personal spite. It was obviously very undesirable that a man of that character should be allowed to remain on the Bench. In another case it was proved that an *ex officio* justice had taken money and acted in collusion with licensed victuallers. Clearly, too, he ought not to have sat on the Bench. Therefore, he entirely approved the principle of this clause, though it was hardly clear, at all events to the lay mind, and he suggested that words should be inserted to make it plain that a previous conviction, bankruptcy, or some other stated causes, should be a condition of the liability to removal. He was most anxious that the clause should remain in the Bill.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle) said the Labour Members viewed this clause with suspicion, which suspicion had been considerably increased by the Lord Advocate's statement. The fact that the late Lord Chancellor was responsible for the insertion of the clause in the Bill was sufficient to condemn it so far as the Labour Members were concerned. Apart from that they would have suspected any attempt to remove without some legitimate cause—and there was no reference to that in the clause—magistrates holding their position by the representative vote of the people. They admitted there might be cases where the discretion of the Lord Chancellor ought to be used, and where a name ought to be struck off the list of justices; but he thought it ought to be because of a very serious charge. In this clause, however, there was not a single suggestion as to why a justice should be removed, and that was their great objection to it. They had a right to expect from the present Government, believing as they did that they wished to recognise democratic tendencies, that they would protect the men whom they were now going to give the opportunity of taking part in the work of county magistrates, and he appealed to the Solicitor-General to insert some words to that effect in the clause even at the risk of necessitating a Report Stage in the progress of the Bill, for there was nothing the country suffered from more than ill-considered and hasty legislation.

*MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton) was sorry to hear the reference of the last speaker to Lord Halsbury, seeing how much the Labour Members owed to his judgments interpreting the Workmen's Compensation Act. The attitude of the Law Officers for both England and Scotland had been very conciliatory, and he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would see his way even now to accept an Amendment which he suggested was really one of substance. Many hon. Members in different parts of the House felt the strongest possible objection to the idea of a man who enjoyed his office by virtue of a popular vote running the danger of being removed on grounds which were not merely badly defined, but not defined at all. He believed he was right in saying that the justices would be at the mercy of the Lord Chancellor, and, if so, it was intolerable in these days that a man who was chosen to an honourable post as mayor of a corporation by the votes of the citizens should even theoretically be deposable from his judicial functions by the Lord Chancellor without any reason given.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said that unless the Solicitor-General would undertake that there should be some modification of the clause the Labour Members would be obliged to vote against it altogether. This class contained the only popularly elected element upon the county benches; therefore they would have to be sure not to allow the authority of the Lord Chancellor to remove these justices from their position without some limitations. Reference had been made to Lord Halsbury's connection with the Workmen's Compensation Act. The late Lord Chancellor was responsible for the serious difficulties which had arisen out of the Taff Vale judgment.

The CHAIRMAN said the discussion of that subject was out of order.

Mr. WARD said that was the reason why he imagined the hon. Member for the Walton Division would have been prevented from making the observations he made.

The CHAIRMAN said the hon. Member must not question his ruling. The preceding speaker would have been called to order if he had made more than a passing reference to this question.

Mr. WARD was sorry if he had broken the rules. The Solicitor-General had enumerated several things, such as bankruptcy, as a reason for the Lord Chancellor having the power to remove a justice, but surely that worked automatically. He understood that a bankrupt could not hold an office of that sort or on a board of guardians, district council, or any other public body. Under these circumstances it was most essential that the Committee should have some guarantee that the only popularly elected justices would not run the risk of being removed from their office without some substantial cause.

Mr. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) suggested that the Solicitor-General should see his way at this or some later stage to amend the clause so that a popularly-elected justice of the peace, who had disqualified himself from holding his position, might be removed only on the representation of the town council or other local governing body.

*Mr. GEORGE FABER (York) said he would take the case of his own constituency to illustrate what might happen under the clause. In York the Lord Mayor was Chairman of the Bench during his year of office, and under this clause it would be in the power of the Lord Chancellor, without giving any reason at all and suddenly on his own *ipse dixit*, to remove from the bench the gentleman occupying that responsible position. He did not say that the Lord Chancellor of the day would do anything of the kind, but he urged that the clause should say specifically what it meant. It should not be left for any official to interpret it as he liked. He hoped the Law Officers would take this point into their serious consideration.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich) said he was delighted at the number of recruits on the Opposition side of the House who desired to get something like a democratic bench. The Solicitor-General had no desire that the clause should be misinterpreted, and if there was any doubt in the matter he hoped it would be made perfectly clear that no person democratically elected, perhaps a mayor, should be excluded at once from the bench through the whim or fancy of some person in authority. A whole neighbourhood might be robbed in that way of the useful services of a democratically elected person who was more known to the exceedingly poor people in the district than the ordinary justice of the peace. Poor people who could not leave their work without serious loss to make application to magistrates in the day time went to such a person as he referred to. When it became known that the magistrate was acting in this way some people might say, "Its time to clip that fellow's wings, and therefore we will write to the Lord Chancellor to get him cut off." He hoped the Solicitor-General would see his way to safeguard the interests of the justices who might be treated in that way.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said the object of the clause was exceedingly simple. There was power at present to remove all justices who were put on by the Lord-Lieutenant. Every person would agree that it was right that there should be the power of removal. Whether it was properly vested in the Lord Chancellor was a different matter. As to the power of removal it was contended by some hon. Members that there should be a difference between a person who held the office *ex officio* for one year and those who were permanent members of the bench. His hon. friends opposite thought that a person who might at one time or other have the confidence of the public should remain a justice of peace without being liable to removal at all whatever his misconduct might be. [Cries of "No."] If necessary let it be proposed that the Lord Chancellor should be in some way or other fettered in the discretion he had to remove justices of the peace from office, but it would be a great mistake to make a distinction by which certain justices could not be removed from office at all. Broadly speaking, the whole of the justices were removable for misconduct.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON: The Bill does not say so.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said there never was any clause plainer than this one. Its object was simply to bring *ex officio* justices of the peace into line with all other justices in regard to being removable. It might be right—he was not saying that it was—to deprive the Lord Chancellor of this power, and that some other person should have it, but that was not the question now before the Committee. The powers of the Lord Chancellor to deal with justices who were not *ex officio* justices was not touched by the clause.

SIR W. ROBSON thought there was a good deal of misapprehension as to the scope and effect of the clause. He would again remind the Committee that this Bill did not pretend to codify the law. The small and simple object of the Bill was to abolish the double qualification now required, and the object of this clause was simply to create a perfectly just and necessary uniformity. In allocating to certain officials the functions of justices of the peace, previous Acts had omitted to say that they should hold the office on the same conditions as other justices. Therefore, it was stated in this clause. It simply stated that any person who became a justice of the peace by virtue of holding an office might be excluded from the exercise of the functions of a justice by the same authority by whom other justices could be removed. There was nothing invidious in that. Some hon. Members seemed to think that some insult was directed against *ex officio* magistrates. Nothing of the kind. The clause was based on a necessary and proper uniformity. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. Augustine's had said that there were cases which had made the clause necessary. He himself did not like to refer to individual cases; one could not be quite sure that he was acquainted with all the circumstances, and the person concerned was not here to answer for himself. He did not care to put this clause on the ground that in several well-known instances it had been necessary to remove justices. He was astonished that hon. Members opposite should get up, one after another, to attack a clause adopted by their own Government and suggested by by their Lord Chancellor. He thought he was entitled to say that. He dared say that there were hon. Members who would be astonished at his astonishment. That was just what he might expect from the course of the discussion. It was said that this clause did not state the grounds upon which a magistrate could be removed. Why should it state the ground? The general law remained, and upon the grounds upon which other magistrates could be removed these magistrates were to be removed. Unless he was prepared to do what he was not prepared to do, and codify the law referring to magistrates, he did not see in what other way the matter could be dealt with. He certainly could not undertake to express all the grounds upon which magistrates might be removed. It had been expressed, he thought rather unthinkingly, that a magistrate could be removed upon the mere *ipse dixit* of the Lord Chancellor. It was true that all judicial functionaries were appointed by the Lord Chancellor and were under his authority, but the Lord Chancellor was a member of the Government, and he and his colleagues in the Cabinet were responsible to Parliament. The Committee could have no better guarantee against wrongful, capricious, or illegal conduct than the fact that in these matters the Government were liable to the censure of this House, and that what they had got was not a guarantee of some collateral authority established side by side with the Lord Chancellor, but the judgment of the Lord Chancellor under the supervision of Parliament. He would like any hon. Member who differed from him to suggest any better tribunal for this purpose than the House of Commons. Of course it was to some extent an incongruous tribunal for dealing with personal misconduct, but it had been thought fit to put this matter under the supervision of Parliament and that was why the Government were made responsible. He did not think anybody could suggest, much less remember, a case where there had been any illegal or capricious removal on the part of the Lord Chancellor. What the Lord Chancellor did in this matter was merely an administrative act and was not an act done of his own personal and private will. It was an administrative act for which he was responsible to his colleagues and, therefore, as far as guarantee was concerned, hon. Members had under the existing law the best of all possible guarantees. They were not, in regard to this question, dealing with hypothetical cases, but with cases of which they had experience. Where in the whole history of the English judiciary could there be found a case of a Lord Chancellor removing a justice of the peace or other judicial officer without stating any grounds for his action ? If he were guilty of such action it would probably be followed before very long by the removal of the Lord Chancellor himself. Hon. Members must not imagine that they were dealing here with any attack upon the elective element. Nothing could be further from the minds of those who framed the Bill. Certainly nothing could be further from his mind, and if he thought that all the dreadful consequences which had been predicted would follow from the passing of the Bill he would not have brought it forward or at that moment advocate the desirability of its passing. Under these circumstances he thought he might ask the Committee to allow the measure to proceed without further discussion upon this point.

*COLONEL WILLIAMS (Dorsetshire, W.) thought the remarks of the Solicitor-General, about what had happened the night before, were rather uncalled for, especially as this clause had never been before the House of Commons before, although it had been before the House of Lords. The hon. and learned Gentleman had seemed to imply an immunity from error on the part of anybody who happened to sit upon the Treasury Bench, and that a clause must be right because it had been approved by both Governments. Nobody wanted to delay the Bill, and they were quite content with the promise that it should be considered in the House of Lords; but he would suggest the insertion of words which would provide that the magistrates now in question might be excluded from the exercise of judicial functions by the same authority and for the same reasons by and for which other justices were disqualified from acting. [AN HON. MEMBER: It is so under the Common Law.] He was sure that the Committee would be glad if the hon. and learned Member would accept some such words.

*MR. F. E. SMITH said he was not satisfied as to the effect of this clause, and as to the existing law if this clause were allowed to pass. The hon. Member for Glamorgan had said that by Clause 4 the same conditions, and the same conditions only, would be attached to popularly elected justices as were attached to justices at the present time. That was not the effect of the clause. At the present time ordinary justices could be removed on grounds which were well understood, and which any lawyer could give after five minutes reference to the statute, but it was the whole object of the insertion of this clause that these popularly elected *ex officio* justices should not, so far as the jurisdiction of the Lord Chancellor was concerned, be on the same footing as ordinary justices. If that were not so, what in the name of common sense was the necessity for the clause at all ? If they were in the same position why should not the Solicitor-General state that they should be removed, not merely by the same authority as ordinary justices, but for the same causes ? The very reluctance of the Solicitor-General to do this created the gravest suspicion. He would make a suggestion that just as the Attorney-General withdrew from one Bill, because he fell out with hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, the Solicitor-General should hand over the further conduct of this Bill to the Attorney-General. He was perfectly certain they would make progress then.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said he was very much surprised to hear from hon. Members above the gangway on the Opposition side of the House, that they did not think that this clause should stand part of the Bill, because it seemed to him that if the Committee excluded this clause they would be setting up a kind of class legislation which there was every prospect would be set up in other respects during the present Parliament. He was not surprised at hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House attempting to do that, but he was surprised that hon. Members on the Opposition side should lend themselves to such an attempt. He had listened to the remarks of the hon. and learned Solicitor-General in the course of which he had explained very lucidly and fully that Parliament or some other authority had decided that the Lord Chancellor was responsible to that House, not only for the appointment but the dismissal of magistrates. He had given, however, various reasons, which could not be reconciled one with another. He had said in the first place, that the Lord Chancellor was responsible to Parliament. That *prima facie* might be very good reasoning, but in practice it was not carried out. No later than that afternoon he himself had submitted, as on a previous occasion, a Question on this very subject in regard to a magistrate who held office by reason of his being a district councillor in Ireland, and on each occasion he had been informed by the Minister to whom the Question was addressed that he could give no information, and that it was a subject entirely within the province of the Lord Chancellor for Ireland.

*THE CHAIRMAN: This Bill does not apply to Ireland.

AN HON. MEMBER: He cannot keep out the head of King Charles.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said that at a later period he intended to put down an Amendment to this clause which should make it apply to Ireland, and the fact that such an Amendment was going to be put down he respectfully submitted would make it permissible for him to argue upon the subject.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member has not handed in any Amendment of that kind, and if he had I am not sure that I should allow him to proceed with his remarks on Ireland at this point.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG asked whether he might argue from analogy. This House was not the ultimate Court of Appeal in matters of this kind, and therefore the Solicitor-General's reference to the Lord Chancellor was not justified. On the other points he perfectly agreed with the Solicitor-General. He thought it was obvious that whether a Justice of the Peace was appointed in the ordinary way or whether he was elected, his duties and position ought to be the same, and he should be subject to the same conditions as any other magistrate. It seemed to him perfectly clear that if an ordinary magistrate was removable by the Lord Chancellor the other class of magistrates should be subjected to the same rules and regulations. Therefore he trusted that if the clause went to a division the Committee would affirm it.

*MR. MADDISON (Burnley) said he desired to see the *ex officio* magistrates treated as fairly as, and on an absolute equality with, other magistrates. He admitted he could rarely understand the clause by once reading it through. During the discussion which had taken place he had read this clause over and over again and he could not see in it anything but absolute equality. This was all his hon. friend representing Barnard Castle wanted, and he would suggest to him that as this was a question of law he would be well advised not to take the law from hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side, because during the discussion on this Bill the Committee had been treated to something besides law: there had been a frivolous childish discussion by the very Gentlemen who were now trying to mislead the Labour Members about the law. He hoped the Labour Members would not be led into the Lobby against the Clause, because nothing would do more injury to the cause they represented than to put forward the idea that the working men of the country wanted some preference for the workman magistrate. Democratic representation would be seriously injured by demanding anything else but equality, and that was what the Bill gave.

MR. JOHN JOHNSON (Gateshead) said the Labour Members at first feared that the new magistrates were going to be put on a footing different from that of other magistrates. They did not desire any special advantage for their class, but it should be distinctly understood that they were exceedingly zealous for the maintenance of the dignity of the class to which they belonged, and therefore they did not desire that magistrates should be removable at the mere caprice of any individual. He was satisfied however with the explanation of the Solicitor-General. He had sufficient confidence not only in his levelness of head but also in his buoyancy of heart. He was satisfied that the hon. and learned Gentleman desired to do all he could in the interest of the working classes, and therefore he had no objection to the clause as framed, being prepared to accept the statement that no special disability would be imposed on new magistrates.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 355; Noes, 82. (Division List No. 65)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Ambrose, Robert
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S Geo.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, T.D. (Derbyshire, N.E.)
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, Sir John T. (Cheshire
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberd'n)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R.R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. P'ncr's, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C.H. (S's'x, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim. S.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galw'y
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clements (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Ginnell, L.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr T'd'l)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, J. M. (Aberd'n, W.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.

Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St.Pancras,E.
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M. (F'lk'rk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal,E.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Marks G. Croydon (Launcest'n
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Donc'r)
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tip'ry Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, James (Roscom'n, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampt'n
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central
Price, Robert John (Norfolk,E.
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford,E
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Roland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G.Scott (Br'df'd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manch'st'r
Scott, A.H.(Ashton-under-L'ne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn.A.Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen,E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.)
Thomasson, Franklin
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, W. Dudley (S'thampton
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cothcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitely, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J.T.(Hud's'f'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,RtHn.SirAlex.F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Barnes, G. N.
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.
Beach,Hn.Michael Hugh Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart

Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Dalyrmple, Viscount
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon, Sir Daniel
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Haddock, George R.
Helmsley, Viscount
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hervey, F.W.F. (Bury S. Edm's
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Dowland
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fare'm
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long, Col. Charles W. (Ev'sh'm
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd U'v.
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

Tellers for the Noes—Colonel Lockwood and Mr. Mitchell-Thomson.

Clauses 5 to 7 agreed to.

Mr. BRACE (Glamorganshire, S.): said he desired to move the new clause standing in his name. His proposal was that every elected mayor of a municipal authority or chairman of a county council, urban, or rural district council, or other like authority should automatically become a permanent justice of the peace. His chief reason for bringing the matter before the Committee was the experience of recent years, in which there had been the extraordinary spectacle of large progressive areas with no justice of the peace who could be fairly called representative of the people. The Committee would be doing a great act of justice if they placed in the hands of the people the election of a magistrate, as would be done if this clause were accepted.

New clause—

"Any person qualified to be elected mayor of a municipal authority or chairman of a county council, urban or rural district council, or other like authority, and who, in fact, has been elected and served in the office of mayor for one year, or in the office of chairman as aforesaid for one year, shall be a permanent Justice of the Peace with all the rights and privileges appertaining to that office."

Brought up and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the Clause be now read a second time."

Sir W. ROBSON said he was obliged to his hon. friend for his interesting speech. After all, it did not require very much arguing one way or the other. The proposed clause introduced a very important principle, which was far beyond the scope of this Bill, and he did not propose to argue it as an abstract principle on its merits. What he desired above all things was to get this Bill. He was sorry he was not able to take this opportunity of extending and altering the law in various directions. It was clear, however, that if such a principle as the hon. Member had proposed were inserted in the Bill, it would cause a remarkable degree of discussion and opposition, which might imperil the main principle of the Bill. The number of bodies included in the terms of the hon. Member's clause was about 9,000, and the proposal was to add 9,000 persons per annum to the roll of permanent justices. He did not wish to condemn or approve such a proposal; but it was a large order. The question of how a popular element in the ordinary magistracy could best be introduced required consideration. He would not like to commit himself now to the form which such a proposal should take. It was clearly a subject for a separate measure, for this Bill did not deal with the appointment of magistrates. It dealt only with the qualification of magistrates. He was not sure that it would be altogether to the advantage of those who might be appointed chairmen of parish councils that there should be attached to them a permanent magistracy. There were a great many men who were competent to act as chairman of a council but were unfitted for the high, serious, and sacred responsibility of a magistrate. He thought, therefore, he was justified in declaring that the adoption of this clause, or of the next clause on the Paper,† would hamper and endanger the progress of the Bill.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) recognised the hard necessity under which the Solicitor-General was to evade the principle involved in the Amendment. But they ought not to negative the clause on the ludicrous and fallacious ground put forward by the hon. and learned Gentleman. He had said that the clause would have the effect of adding 9,000 persons annually to the roll of Justices of the Peace. That argument rested entirely upon the assumption that no county, district, municipal, or parish council allowed its chairman to exercise his functions for more than a year. Except in the case of municipal councils, the reverse was the practice. He did not believe the County Council of the West Riding of Yorkshire had had more than two chairmen since its inception, and he knew a case of a district council which had been working for many years under one chairman.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said that this clause was by far the most valuable one the Committee had had to discuss in connection with the Bill. If adopted there was no doubt it would be a good thing for the Bench, as it would be frequently recruited with a man who had been selected by his fellows deliberately and in a democratic manner. It would also be a good thing for the councils, because it would attract men of higher attainments to their service. The figures given by the Solicitor-General were utterly fallacious, because the chairmen of these bodies were, for the most part, already magistrates, so that the magistracy would not be increased in anything like the proportion suggested. In the part of Lancashire where he lived, there was only about one in seven, he believed, of the gentlemen appointed as chairmen of these bodies who was not already a magistrate. He pointed out that in connection with the Liverpool Bench the average number elected every year was fourteen, and that in four cases out of five the gentleman who was elected Lord Mayor was already a Justice of the Peace. It was, therefore, perfectly obvious that there would not be added to the Bench members in anything like the proportion suggested by the Solicitor-General. He was one of those who believed that the present system of appointing magistrates was open to very grave criticism. Many Members strongly objected to the kind of men who were appointed, and when there was put forward a wholesome and first-class suggestion under which a man selected by his fellows for high office would have a chance of being placed on the Bench he thought it ought not to be lost sight of. He, therefore, supported the proposed new clause.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON said that every Member of the Committee on whichever side he sat ought to be prepared to support the proposed clause, if only for the reason that it would relieve him of one of the difficulties of his position. No sooner was a Member of Parliament elected than he was appealed to on all hands to obtain appointments to the magisterial bench, and Members sometimes found it impossible to resist the appeals of their strongest supporters, in many cases irrespective of qualification for judicial position. He thought there was something to be said for his hon. friend's Amendment from the standpoint of continuing the services of the Chairmen of county, borough, and rural councils in judicial positions. The numbers given by the Solicitor-General did not at all frighten him, because he did not think they were at all accurate. Those who had been connected with public bodies knew that the chairmen in a considerable number of instances were already magistrates. That remark applied especially to the chairmen of the county and borough councils. He would like to point out to the Solicitor-General that in some of the rural districts there was a great scarcity of magistrates, not so much for performing the actual work of the bench as for minor purposes such as the taking of oaths. There was a very great lack of qualified men to do this work. He knew that from his own experience, representing as he did a very widely scattered rural district. People had sometimes to go miles in order to find a justice to render them the service they needed. He might be told that this would all be altered when the Bill came into operation. It would probably be said that magistrates in the county divisions would come up almost like mushrooms, inasmuch as the Bill removed the qualification which had debarred many people from receiving these appointments. But having removed the high and absurd qualification which had existed so long, the difficulty was that they would commit the making of the appointments to the Lord-Lieutenant or it might be the Lord Chancellor. He was quite willing to make every allowance for the possible argument that the appointments were made fairly. That was not his experience. The political and party element entered far too largely into the appointment of magistrates. The Solicitor-General had urged that the Bill did not deal with the process of appointment by election. While there was something to be said for the hon. and learned Gentleman's argument, he would point out that these men were already appointed, and he and his friends merely wanted to extend the period of office. They had received the confidence of the authorities of which they were chairmen, and in order to do so they must have rendered considerable public service. They got their positions not because of any political services rendered to one Party or another. Except in those cases where the local elections were conducted on purely Party lines—he was pleased to be able to say that there were very few of them, and he hoped they would become fewer — a man who succeeded to the position of chairman did so because of the very valuable services he had rendered to the public authority by whom he was elected. That being so, why should they object to continue as a permanent justice a man who had secured the confidence of a representative public body? If the Solicitor-General was not prepared to recognise that the time had come when the magistrates should be elected by an entirely different process, he hoped he would be prepared to consider an extension of the term, he did not say to all the authorities named in the Amendment, but to those men who had by virtue of office held the position of magistrates for one or two years. He thought the Bill might be amended in that direction with considerable advantage.

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† The Clause referred to was as follows:—The chairman of a board of guardians and the chairman of a parish council shall, if otherwise qualified, be by virtue of his office justice of the peace for the county in which the district is situate, in the same way as a chairman of a district council becomes a justice of the peace.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS appealed to his hon. friend who had moved the Amendment not to press it, for the reason that he would not get the sense of the Committee on the particular subject with which it dealt. This was a Bill to remove the present property qualification for the office of Justice of the Peace; it did not deal at all with the persons who appointed him. He was not going to express any final opinion as to the merits or demerits of what had fallen from his hon. friend. There was a great deal to be said both for and against the proposal now before the Committee. One thing that might be said was that Members of Parliament were worried by people who had an ambition to become Justices of the Peace. It might be that in order to achieve that ambition they would obtain the position in local authorities indicated in the Amendment. Having thus qualified for appointment as Justice of the Peace they might no longer care to serve the public in the capacity by virtue of which they gained the office. The proposal was one which required a great deal of consideration. He would point out to his hon. friend also that people who were *ex officio* Justices of the Peace during a year of office in a post to which they were elected, were people who enjoyed the confidence of the electors at the time, but it did not follow that that confidence would be continued. There were many Members in the last House of Commons who were not elected to the present House, and there were many Members in the present House who would not be elected to the next one. These were considerations which went to the substance of the clause. He appealed to his hon. friend to withdraw the Amendment for the reasons stated. If it were possible upon such a Bill as this to deal with the matter they might have long discussions upon whether there out to be Justices of the Peace at all. For Parliamentary reasons he could not support the Amendment.

Mr. BRACE said that without some undertaking from the Solicitor-General to deal with this point he was not disposed to withdraw his Amendment. If the present opportunity passed he did not know when another chance would occur for dealing with this question, which was one of considerable public importance. The present Bill only removed the property qualification, and the appointment of magistrates would still remain with the Lords-Lieutenant and the Lord Chancellor, and his object was to secure some selection by the people. The Lords-Lieutenant in many counties had declined to make gentlemen magistrates who had the fullest qualifications. As a rule the fact that a gentleman belonged to the opposite political party to that of the Lord-Lieutenant was sufficient to condemn him. He had been endeavouring to get some labour magistrates appointed, but he had not met with much success, and unless he got more encouragement from the Solicitor-General he could not agree to withdraw his Amendment.

*Mr. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston) said that the Amendment which had been proposed was extremely vague and unworkable. It referred to "all other like authorities" and that was a very vague expression. It proposed that the chairman in question should be a permanent Justice of the Peace, but it did not say whether for the county or for the borough. He agreed that this question was outside the scope of the Bill. It was quite true that chairmen were not changed every year, but if this Amendment were adopted he ventured to say that they would be changed much oftener, and there would be a tendency to allow every member of the District Council to become the chairman in turn, so that they might become permanent Justices of the Peace. In this way they would in some Divisions practically double the number of justices every year, and the magisterial benches would become overcrowded. It had never been considered right in this country that those who were to have criminal jurisdiction over any community should be subject to election by that community. He did not think that a man to whom it was proposed to entrust this power over his fellows should be subject to election. He believed that in America there had been and perhaps still was an elected magistracy, but it had not worked well. In this country the last vestige of the practice disappeared in the abolition of the method by which coroners used to be appointed, and he hoped the House would never revive any proposal of that kind. He did not think any serious attack had been made upon the manner in which magistrates had been appointed, for they all knew what great pains were taken by the lords-lieutenant to select suitable men. [Ministerial cries of "Oh, oh!"] He would remind hon. Members that he was speaking with some experience upon this question. He knew that lords-lieutenant had a great many applications and considerable pressure was brought to bear upon them, and he believed that they all took great pains to sift the applications, and many of them were extremely anxious to appoint magistrates from both sides of politics. Apart from that there was the power of the Lord Chancellor for the time being, who could, if the case required it, exercise a certain amount of persuasion upon lords-lieutenant to submit names from both Parties, and he very properly exercised that power. He did not think any case could be made out for attacking the present system. If they were going to establish a system of indirect popular election to the Bench, then it would become a matter of politics. Many councils were elected for political reasons, and in that way they would get the very thing which they so much objected to, namely, a political selection instead of a selection independent altogether of Party. For those reasons he hoped that the principle of this Amendment would not be admitted.

Mr. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) said as a magistrate for several counties that his experience was that the qualification as a rule was not ability, but a question of money. Any man who came into a county, if he were rich, generally managed to be appointed a Justice of the Peace. It had been said that the appointments made by the Lords-Lieutenant were generally of a satisfactory character, but his experience was that the appointments were invariably of a political character, and the question which the Government ought to ask themselves was whether these appointments in the future were going to be free from political bias. During the time he had been a Member of Parliament he had never been asked to recommend names to the Lords-Lieutenant. In his county they had a very excellent Lord-Lieutenant, but what was going to be the position in future? The Bill would remove the property qualification. The reason the Solicitor-General would not accept the Amendment was that he considered it outside the scope of the Bill. He thought it was the duty of hon. Members sitting on the Ministerial side to support the Amendment. If the Solicitor-General could give them some undertaking that he would in a reasonable time reconsider this question in all its bearings, and abolish the present system, then he thought the Amendment might be withdrawn, in order that the Government might have time to consider the point. But if the hon. and learned Gentleman could not give such an undertaking he would be bound to vote for the Amendment.

MR. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire W.R., Barkston Ash) said he should certainly support the Solicitor-General in the stand he had made. A strong attack had been made on the method of appointing magistrates, an attack which was absolutely unjustified, and a strong attack had been made on Lords-Lieutenant which also was unjustified. An interesting statement had been made by the hon. Member for South Glamorgan to the effect that if it was made a little more easy for some of the gentlemen in whom he was interested to be made magistrates he would support the hon. and learned Gentleman. After that they would watch with great interest any appointments to the magistracy in the constituency represented by the hon. Member. They had heard a good deal about integrity, and he would like to know whether the Party opposite were going to set an example of integrity in this matter. He hoped there was no truth in the statement that pressure was being brought to bear upon the Government to appoint magistrates of a different character. Perhaps the most remarkable feature in the debate was the extraordinary dexterity of various legal Members opposite. The speech of the hon. and learned Solicitor-General was in itself remarkable, but the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Mid Glamorgan was the most remarkable exhibition of skating over thin ice he had ever seen. The line taken by the hon. and learned Member was that it would be a mistake to take a division on this Amendment because a division would not record the true opinion of the Committee. Why not? He was going to record his opinion on the merits of the Amendment. He was totally opposed to it, and the hon. and learned Solicitor-General, he was glad to say, had also signified his intention of so doing. He hoped that the pressure from behind would not on this occasion be sufficiently severe to induce hon. Members to recede from that position. Another argument of the hon. and learned Member for Mid Glamorgan was that these elected gentlemen should not be made permanent magistrates because at some future time they might forfeit the support of those who placed them in their positions.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS: You are quite wrong.

MR. LANE-FOX: If the hon. and learned Gentleman did not say that he would like to know what his argument was. He also disavowed the attack the hon. and learned Gentleman made on the *personnel* of the magistracy. This was a matter of considerable principle, and he was surprised that hon. Members opposite were not more anxious to do something for their *protégé*, the chairman of the parish council, who was the one ewe lamb of a Radical Government of other years. The Committee ought to consider those who had taken part in the conduct of affairs before the magistrates and who wished to see the welfare of the bench preserved. They ought to take care that nothing they did impaired the position of the bench and prevented them from giving an unbiassed opinion on the questions which came before them. The Government should insist that those appointed to the position of a magistrate should not be dependent on the vote of anyone. The object of the original property qualification was to secure men who were independent of local feeling or favour and therefore able to give a fair and unbiassed opinion. If the Committee thought they ought to abolish that qualification they ought not to go so far as to create magistrates who might be dependent on the support of their fellows in that way. He certainly hoped hon. Members below the gangway would press this Amendment to a division in order that they might see whether hon. Gentlemen opposite were totally opposed to elected magistrates. In holding the opinions they did and working as strongly as they did for the welfare of the magisterial bench he and his friends were only doing what they thought was right, because they had sat upon the bench and were anxious to keep it in as creditable a position as possible.

*MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster) said he only intervened for a moment because he had put down an Amendment on the lines of that moved by the hon. Member for South Glamorganshire. Although he had withdrawn that Amendment after a conversation with the hon. and learned Solicitor-General, he had received no less than 123 letters from district councils confirming the view which he had adopted. He did not propose to follow Conservative speakers in their remarks as to a permament bench. It was a mockery to say they were attacking individual lords-lieutenant, but they could not shut their eyes to the fact that very few middle-class Liberals and Radicals ever got on to the bench at all. The system was this. The members of the bench considered who were suitable men and they suggested their names to the Lord-Lieutenant, who in his turn suggested them to the Lord Chancellor. That was all very well, but it practically resulted in a particular class of men being appointed to the bench to the exclusion of those who were perfectly entitled to be appointed. He hoped the Solicitor-General would be able to hold out some hope to the hon. Member for South Glamorganshire, because the present system did work most unfairly and to the disadvantage of those who occupied such positions as he himself occupied.

*MR. MADDISON said that if this clause had any value at all it was for raising the question of elected magistrates. There was much to be said both for and against that system. But it was quite obvious that the matter could not be left where this clause left it. He would therefore suggest to his hon. friend, after listening to the hon. Member for Barkston Ash, who was opposed altogether to the elective principle, that it would be more advantageous if he withdrew the clause and took an opportunity of raising the question on another occasion and in another way, when he would not be embarrassed as on the present occasion. What was the central principle which they defended in the country? It was that they were dissatisfied with the present system of appointing magistrates. He thought the hon. and learned Member for Kingston had marred an excellent speech by attempting to show that the appointments of lords-lieutenant had given satisfaction to both Parties. It was deplorably notorious that there were benches almost entirely composed of one side of politics. He was not satisfied with the existing system, and, although he was not so much desirous of voting against the elective principle, he thought it was a matter which required very grave consideration. The great principle he was anxious to secure was the removal of the property qualification for magistrates, and he felt that that central principle would be jeopardised if they allowed this Bill to be encumbered with such a proposal as his hon. friend had moved. [Cries of "Why?"] Because the division would be taken as a vote against the principle and as a declaration that the House of Commons was not in favour of something which it might otherwise be inclined to adopt. In politics he had painfully learned that one could not get all he wanted and when he wanted it. He urged his hon. friend opposite to get hold of a little bit and then to do his best to get the rest afterwards.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.) believed that the existing system of appointing magistrates worked most objectionably, and he trusted that the present Government would take strong and drastic measures to correct the obvious evils which through a long succession of Governments had arisen from the mode of appointment. The administration of justice required that the magisterial benches should not possess a preponderance of one political Party. Personally he had never felt congenial towards the elective magistrate, but the present system was a scandal, and the best way of getting rid of a dangerous agitation was that bold and active executive action which he ventured to suggest was in the power of the Government. He felt some difficulty in agreeing to the elective magistracy as a permanency, because in the case of the election of a mayor one term of office would entitle him to become a permanent magistrate. They all knew the circumstances under which a man might be elected the mayor of a borough, and it might happen that his one term of office would convince the people that they ought not to have elected him. If the mayor had served two or three terms of office that might give some assurance that the people, after service, had determined that the man was fit to remain at the head of the municipality. The first election of mayor was as a rule an experiment, and if that experiment terminated to the dissatisfaction of the people and the man lost their confidence, under this Amendment that man would still for all time be a magistrate. He did not think that was a reasonable proposal.

Question put, and negatived.

*Mr. LUTTRELL (Devonshire, Tavistock) proposed to move the following new clause—

"The chairman of a board of guardians and the chairman of a parish council shall, if otherwise qualified, be by virtue of his office justice of the peace for the county in which the union or parish is situate, in the same way as a chairman of a district council becomes a justice of the peace."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.), on a point of order, asked whether in view of the fact that the clause just negatived provided for "other like authorities," this Amendment was in order. He wished to know whether those words did not govern parish councils as well as boards of guardians.

MR. STUART WORTLEY contended that because the House had refused the larger principle it ought not to be taken that they were not willing to accept the smaller principle.

*MR. LUTTRELL said that the Amendment just disposed of was one to make permanent magistrates, and he wished to point out that his proposal was to make temporary magistrates those who held a temporary office, and he submitted that that proposition was in order.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This Amendment raises a different principle from the last Amendment, and therefore it is in order.

*MR. LUTTRELL said he was proposing to allow men who had been elected by their fellows to responsible positions and who enjoyed public confidence to become justices of the peace during their term of office. If it was admitted, as it must be admitted by all candid men, that the magisterial benches were too largely composed of one particular class, then it seemed to him that what he was proposing was a very fair way of remedying that state of things. His proposal was to allow the chairmen of parish councils to become justices of the peace, and it was practically giving the parish councils power to select a magistrate. One of the great faults of the present system was that a large number of cases were looked at from one particular point of view. With one particular class of magistrates poaching was looked upon as an awful crime, whereas a magistrate who belonged to the labouring class might not look upon poaching as a very serious offence. He believed the benches would be more respected if they were drawn not so much from one class, and by adopting his proposal they would largely achieve that result. By adopting the Amendment the Committee would only be following the example of a country which was certainly not lacking in intelligence, namely, Scotland, where chairmen of parish councils had for some time been justices of the peace. He thought the new clause was fair and reasonable and ought to have the support of a Liberal Government. He brought forward this question many years ago and got a Bill which contained a proposal of this kind through its Second Reading, but it went no further. On this occasion they had an opportunity. They had a Liberal Government bringing forward a Bill to amend the law relating to justices of the peace, and if the Government were worthy of the name of Liberal it would thoroughly amend the law including the point under discussion. He heard an hon. Member say something about "another place," but he thought they would be a very poor sort of Liberals if they moulded their opinion upon what was said by noble Lords in another place. He intended to go to a division.

New clause:—

The chairman of a board of guardians and the chairman of a parish council, unless personally disqualified by any Act, ~~shall be by~~ virtue of his office justice of the peace for the county in which the district is situate, in the same way as a chairman of a district council becomes a justice of the peace.—(*Mr. Luttrell.*)

Brought up and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

SIR W. ROBSON said he would not detain the Committee very long upon this clause, because he really stated upon the last clause what he had to say in reference to this one. He had done so specifically with the other clause which raised the same question in a different and he thought a better and more intelligible form. He had taken the opportunity on the last clause of dealing with the reasons why he should invite the Committee not to accept this clause. His hon. friend had held up the fear of the report stage and of another place. He did not know that he was animated by any fear either of the report stage or of another place, but he took them into potential consideration. The question raised by this clause related more to appointment than to qualification, and if they were to deal with the question relating to appointment they would have to deal with it in a separate measure, in regard to which they would have to treat and discuss many things which were not germane to this question. Therefore he protested against any such principle or scheme being brought into the measure at all, because any one who had to face the programme of work which the House had before them would take note of the large amount of detailed business which awaited the consideration of the House on the various stages of the measure they had before them, and it would indeed be a bold Ministry who did not regard the work before them with some reasonable fear—he would not say craven fear—and apprehension. He could not give any promise or undertaking that this question of elective magistracy should be dealt with in this session or in any session to come. He was not a member of the Cabinet, but only a very humble member of the Ministry; therefore he was not entitled to give any such undertaking, and he deprecated the introduction of this topic as one which was not wise in itself, and as one which was likely to damnify and endanger the prospect of carrying a really useful measure. He would not deal with the merits of this clause, but he would remind hon. Members who reproached him that they appeared to have an inordinate appetite for discussions which were beyond the scope of the Bill. He had no such appetite, and nothing would induce him to ask the Committee to vote upon this clause upon its merits. That was not the ground upon which he refused to accept the clause. If the Committee desired to pass this Bill they must carefully restrict its scope, they must not include matters with which it did not deal, and they must refrain from introducing any large and striking principle which it did not contain. The reform dealt with was not a slight one and had long been delayed, and on the eve of achievement he did not wish to see it imperilled.

*MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said he was very grieved to hear the decision of the Solicitor-General in this matter. He had thought that after the waste of time in useless discussions and divisions they might have got something more substantial out of the Bill. The Bill as introduced was a useful one, but now they had a real opportunity of going one better. Hon. Members who lived in cities did not realise the responsibilities of chairmen of boards of guardians and parish councils as did those who lived in the country. He urged the Government to make the little concession which was asked for and hoped they would not press the question to a division against those who supported the new clause. If they did, however, he hoped the hon. Member for Tavistock would press the matter to a division himself. It was all very well to say they had the opportunity of raising this question on Tuesdays and Wednesdays when no doubt they would get an expression of sympathy from the Minister concerned, but here they had an opportunity of obtaining real reform and he hoped hon. Members would support the Amendment.

Mr. CLEMENT EDWARDS (Denbigh District) asked the Chairman, on a point of order, whether, if this Amendment were carried, it would not involve the appointment of women to the judicial bench inasmuch as a woman might hold the position of chairman of a board of guardians.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order; it is a point of construction.

*Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said he rose to remind the hon. and learned Solicitor-General of a fact which might have escaped his recollection, viz., that the insertion of the chairman of the board of guardians as an *ex officio* magistrate was only accidentally omitted from the Local Government Act of 1894. He knew that from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton who was in charge of the Bill. He suggested that if his hon. friend would withdraw from his clause "the chairman of a parish council" they might agree upon the matter.

*Mr. DUNN (Cornwall, Camborne) urged that nothing could be better, both for the justices and for the parish councils, than that the chairmen of parish councils should be during their year of office *ex officio* justices. We had in this country three municipal bodies—municipal corporations, urban district councils, and parish councils. At the present moment the chairmen of two of these bodies were *ex officio* justices, while the chairman of last named was not. By adopting the proposed clause the Committee would simply remove a disability which ought not to exist.

Sir BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) said he could not vote with the hon. Member, and thought that hon. Members who were in favour of making chairmen of parish councils *ex officio* justices had no idea of the number of parishes in the country. In his own constituency he had no less than 140 parishes, and if the chairmen of the councils were made justices the bench would be swamped.

Mr. O'HARA (Monaghan, N.) said that in Scotland the chairman of a parish council was a justice of peace, and he did not see why the least objection should be taken to the appointment of such chairmen in this country to a similar office. Scotland had not suffered in consequence of these appointments, and the people who occupied the position in England were surely in no way inferior to those in Scotland. He could not see why the proposal should not be accepted unanimously. He had had experience of a great many areas in Scotland since the Local Government Bill came into operation, and he knew of no more useful men in the capacity of magistrates than the chairmen of parish councils had been. He asked the hon. and learned Gentleman to accept the Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 59; Noes, 315. (Division List No. 66.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T.C.
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barrie, H.T.(Londonderry, N.)
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Brace, William
Byles, William Pollard
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Captain James(Down, E.
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dillon, John
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Gill, A. H.
Hardie, J.Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Hazleton, Richard
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hodge, John
Houston, Robert Paterson
Jenkins, J.
Jowett, F. W.
King, Sir Henry Seymour(Hull)
Macpherson, J. T.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Meagher, Michael
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
O'Brien, Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N
Parker, James (Halifax)
Radford, G. H.
Richards, T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)

Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton-und.-Lyne
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Smith, F.E.(Liverpool, Walton)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Summerbell, T.
Thomson W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Toulmin, George
Wardle, George J.
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Luttrell and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland-Hood, RtHn.SirAlex.F.
Adkins, W. Ryland
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt.Hn.HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt.Hn Sir H.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A.(Finsbury, E.)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, JohnWilliams(Dev'np'rt
Benn, W(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J.H.(Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T.D.(Derbyshire,N.E.)
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brigg, John
Brooke, Stopford
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs.,Leigh
Bryce, Rt.Hn. James(Aberdeen
Bryce, J.A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon Thomas
Cairns, Thomas
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt.Hn.Victor C. W.
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Coats, SirT.Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,CH(Sussex,E.Grinst'd)
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randall
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David (MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, CharlesRamsay(Galw'y
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doughty, Sir George
Duckworth, James
Du Cros, Harvey
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Forster, Henry William
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hardy, Laurence (Kent,Ashf'rd
Harmsworth, Cecil B.(Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazle, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Helmsley, Viscount
Henderson, J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Hervey, F.W.F(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hooper, A. G.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J.M.(FalkirkB'ghs.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles(Donegal, E.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick

Magnus, Sir Philip
Mallet, Charles E.
Marks, G.Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Nicholson, Wm.G.(Petersfield)
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parkes, Ebenezer
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlington
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Price, RobertJohn (Norfolk,E.)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford, E.)
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, S.(Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Sears, J. E.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Starkey, John R.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, W.Dudley (Southampt'n
Wason, JohnCathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Schedules agreed to.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report the Bill without Amendment to the House."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 314; Noes, 37. (Division List No. 67.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams(Devonp't
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D.(Derbyshire,N.E.)
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs.,Leigh
Bryce, Rt. Hn James(Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Rt.HnRichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.

Clynes, J. R.
Coats, SirT.Glen (Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, SirWm.J(S.Pancras, W
Corbett, CH (Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Davies, David (MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, CharlesRamsay(Galw'y
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dillon, John
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col. Alan(Hereford,S.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt.HnHerbert John
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J.M.(Aberdeen, W.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hooper, A. G.
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M.(FalkirkB'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeigh, Charles(Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G.Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem ,Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts., Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W.H.M.(Suffolk, Eye)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford, E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards, T. F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Scott,A.H.(Ashton-under-Lyne
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)

Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C.(Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Wardle, George J.
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Rt.Hn.SirAlex.F.
Balcarres, Lord
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt.Hn.Victor C. W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.
Craig, CaptainJames(Down,E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Doughty, Sir George
Du Cros, Harvey
Faber, George Denison (York)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Houston, Robert Paterson
King, Sir Henry Seymour(Hull)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlingt'n
Roberts, S.(Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, F.E.(Liverpool, Walton
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thomson, W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Claude Hay and Mr. H. H. Marks.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

RESERVE FORCES BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 :—

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said he desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman a Question as to the precise meaning of this clause. The Bill had been before the House many years and had been strongly objected to by hon. Members now supporting the Government, owing largely, he thought, to this Clause 2. He wished to know why the right hon. Gentleman required for the War Office powers for the future which it did not at present possess of transferring a man from one branch of the service to another. Was it to be supposed that a man who had enlisted as an infantry man, for instance, was to be transferred to some other arm?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington) said this Bill was introduced by the Government of which the noble Lord opposite was a member, and the reason for the clause was that under the Act of 1852 if a man enlisted in a particular arm of the service and went into the Reserve he could only be called up to join the particular arm in which he had enlisted. The Bill was not retrospective, for those who had already enlisted would have that right still. The change was only with regard to the future, and the reason it was proposed was that when, during the South African War, they wished to call up certain cavalry regiments for remount purposes, they found they could not call them up except for cavalry purposes.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover) said the Unionist Party could accept the clause and would be very pleased to see the Bill pass.

Clause 2 and remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

SEAMEN'S AND SOLDIERS' FALSE CHARACTERS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 :—

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) moved to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress and ask leave to sit again —(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

Mr. HALDANE appealed to the hon. Member not to take that course. He pointed out that this Bill was also a legacy of the late Government. He proposed what the late Government had proposed, and desired to carry out the proposals they desired in the same way as the late Government proposed to carry them out. It was a Bill of the simplest character, and contained, he believed, no controversial elements. As the law stood there was no remedy against a man who forged the character of a soldier or seaman, save that to be obtained by the cumbrous procedure of common law. In the case of servants there was a remedy, and the late Government took the view that a remedy should be provided in this case. The object of the Bill was simply to bring these cases under summary jurisdiction.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said in his opinion the penalties to be inflicted for forging a man's character were far too light. A penalty of three months imprisonment for falsifying the character of a soldier or a sailor was much too little. These documents were the only documents in the possession of a man who had served his country well, with which he could go into the open market and obtain employment in civil life. If once any doubt was cast upon the true value of those documents—if once the employers doubted their accuracy — an additional penalty was inflicted on the man who had served in the Navy or Army. Under these circumstances he thought there ought to be a much more drastic penalty for this crime if it was at all prevalent, and as to that no one could give better information than the right hon. Gentleman in charge of this Bill.

* **Mr. GEORGE FABER** said that in the case of so serious a crime, the Bill provided a penalty which was quite insufficient. Forgery was one of the most serious crimes in this country, and the reason why the Bill had been blocked year after year by the Party opposite when in opposition must have been because the penalty was so inadequate.

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the Clock, further proceeding was postponed without Question put pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

ARMY RECRUITING.

Major SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) rose to call attention to the question of recruiting for and the present establishment of the Regular Army, and to move "That under the present system large numbers of men are recruited for the Regular infantry who cannot become efficient soldiers, while at the same time it is found difficult to obtain the number placed on the Estimates, and that, in the opinion of this House, an amendment of the existing system is urgently required." He said that he moved the Resolution with a deep feeling of responsibility, because he submitted that the present system was ill adapted to our needs and added greatly to the sum of human misery. What did they do when they tried to recruit to the Army? When a man had to make his choice of a profession it might well be that he suffered some misfortune, and at that moment the State stepped in and took him very often as a recruit for the Army without his full sanction. He had confined his Motion largely to the Regular infantry. He wished to state that he knew many men who had served in that force with great credit to themselves and to the Army. His Motion principally referred to another class who had not and could not become efficient soldiers. They were enlisted in an undignified manner. Recruiting officers endeavoured to attract men who were hungry and because they were hungry, and the men signed on for a number of years owing to their then circumstances, whereas, if they had had proper time to think over the matter, they would probably not have adopted a military career. Those unwilling soldiers did not add to the strength of the Army. In regard to this question, he would not deal so much with the disastrous effects on the Army itself as with the social results. This undignified method of entrapping men having been adopted, let the House consider whether there was any justification for the allegation that there were in the Army, owing to the system of service and the prospects held out, large numbers of unwilling soldiers. The annual report of the Army was very sad reading. He asked hon. Members to consider for a moment the case of men who left the Army within three months of joining it. A soldier could be of no use for defending India or other garrison service until he had served four or five years. Those who left in three months proved that they were unwilling soldiers. The penalties for desertion were heavy, and no man would face them unless he was very dissatisfied with the service, and the actual punishment for desertion debarred a soldier from employment in the future, because he lost that exemplary character which was essential if he was to be an efficient servant of the State after he had left the Army. Last year more than one in every ten of the men in the regular Army, or 107 per 1,000, left the Army for various causes such as desertion, dismissal, or purchase within three months of joining. He had compared those figures with the police force, in which he found that approximately only one in forty left within three months of joining the force. Why was there this great discrepancy? There was one illuminating page in the document to which he had referred giving the number who had become non-effective before three years were up. Out of 28,000 men enlisted three and a half years ago, no fewer than 9,000 had become non-effective before completing three years service. If one considered the money cost of those men, it would be seen what an absurd system it was under which the State enlisted 9,000 men and spent £100 a year upon each, and afterwards found that they had never been of the least use. With regard to crime in the Army, it was not like crime in civil life, because it was crime under the particular code of laws under which the soldier served. He had often thought it would be a good thing if soldiers were placed under the ordinary law. Although many of the soldiers' crimes were mostly moral delinquencies, the effects were the same, because a soldier lost his good character by going to prison. How many went to prison from the infantry? He had found that a little more than one in every twenty of the Regular infantry at home went to prison every year. When they reflected that going to prison meant not only suffering imprisonment, but also a loss of character, hon. Members would see that there was some justification for the words he had used that the present system of recruiting added more to the sum of human misery than any other organisation in the body politic. He had denounced this system on many occasions and he denounced it again that night. It might be asked what was the particular vicious principle which was the cause of these evils. They might inquire why one in every twenty should go to prison every year when in the case of the Metropolitan Police only one in 12,000 went to prison each year. Why should there be this extraordinary discrepancy? The reason was that we had unwilling soldiers, and that was owing to the fact that we had a method of recruiting which was unknown to any other country in the world or to any other service in this country. We took a man just when he should be looking out for a profession or a trade, and enlisted him into something which was neither the one thing nor the other. Nothing which the infantry soldier learned was of any use to him in civil life. Attempts had been made to teach the soldier a real trade, but they had not been successful. It was his belief that we should never have the Army we needed until the Army was made a profession and career for every man who joined it. The voluntary Army of America cost nearly £300 or £400 per man, and out of a population nearly double that of this country America had an Army immeasurably smaller than ours. All other countries had conscript armies, where every man had to serve, and each man suffered the disability of being withdrawn from civil employment for a fixed period of years. Every other country provided a career for the soldiers. If hon. Members put themselves in the place of an inhabitant of another planet, looking at this question *de novo*, they would find that in this island postal telegraphists, policemen, marine men and the men in the Navy all had a life career given to them, and their future was assured. But in the Army alone the State took men when it suited its purpose, and afterwards threw the men back upon the labour market like a squeezed lemon. It was a ridiculous and a wrong system, and it was wasteful of money, because the men who were supposed to be ready for active service were not ready. He did not think it would be an easy thing for the Secretary of State for War to send one single battalion of troops abroad without calling up the reserves except at such a low strength that it would be ridiculous to send it out at all. The system was far more wasteful in regard to human happiness and health. Of all the different occupations which the State exacted from its children, the Army was the one which took most out of the men. Therefore the Army was the first of all occupations in which the State should be careful to take men of the best character and to give them a life career. He believed that the only solution was that the State must absolutely abandon this system of enlisting men at the age of seventeen or eighteen for seven years, and then throwing them back upon the labour market without a pension. He was convinced that this system added to the evil of unemployment, and could not produce an efficient Army. The State must enlist men as it enlisted the police and the Royal Irish Constabulary or other public employment. It must enlist men of full age who would be ready after a few months service to proceed to those foreign stations for which they were required. As to length of service, he did not desire to say anything beyond stating that it was essential, in view of danger to health of the occupation of a soldier, and of the impossibility of teaching him a trade, to give him a life career, and employment or pension, or both. The Secretary of State for War might say that this would add to the cost of the Army, and that he had a dread of increasing the pension list. He wished to urge that during many years past various Secretaries of State, in order to satisfy so-called economists who always wished to see the greatest number of men at the smallest amount of cost, had sacrificed the happiness and welfare of thousands of men. By this system the War Office must of necessity enlist men whom they knew could never become efficient soldiers. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had said that this method of enlisting men must come to an end if we were to have an effective Army. Although he differed from subsequent suggestions of the right hon. Gentleman, at that point he was at one with him. So long as the State continue to entrap men into the Army, and then throw them back upon the labour market, a very heavy responsibility rested upon it. He believed this was an unfair and a mean thing on the part of the State. One could hardly look into the newspapers any day without seeing an account of some soldier being found in the workhouse, after having served his country faithfully. Frequently soldiers committed a crime in order to leave the Army. Therefore it was necessary to put an end to that state of thing, to assimilate the Army to other State employment, and to give a soldier a life career. This was the true Army reform, because the present system was the root of the trouble. It was necessary to look not only at the military force they would exert but also at the effect the system would have upon the body politic. For these reasons he commended his Resolution to the House, believing that the arguments he had urged were almost unanswerable. The evil was great, and he hoped that some amendment might be made in the present system which would at least provide a happy, efficient, and contented Army.

MR. GUEST (Cardiff District), in seconding the Motion, said he was very glad that his hon. and gallant friend had raised this question of recruiting, because upon it hinged the whole problem of the Army and military organisation and preparation. The mover of the Motion had alluded to the social side of our present military system, and the way in which recruits were obtained. He proposed to look at the military side of the problem, because he contended that that was not less affected than the social side. Everyone agreed that their object ought to be to devise, if possible, the most economical and the most efficient military system. What about economy? At present the Army cost this country £30,000,000 a year, and it cost the taxpayers of India another £22,000,000 a year. Our military system was the most expensive in the whole world. One would expect, seeing that relatively we had a small Army, that we should have with such a vast expenditure very great efficiency, but we did not get it. The efficiency of the Army was prevented and interfered with principally in two ways. In the first place, a great many men in the Army were immature and could not be used either for garrison duty in India or for campaigning. But beyond that there was a great waste going on. The present practice in the Army was to take men at least two years under the age at which they could serve in India or in a campaign. As the authorities had adopted in the past the system of seven years with the Colours, it was obvious that two-sevenths of the force at any moment was in a state of immaturity and could not be relied upon for any practical purposes. Apart from that immaturity, there was the waste. The Annual Report of the Army showed that the waste in 1904, exclusive of those who went to the Reserve, amounted to 30,000 men. Perhaps he ought to deduct from this total the 6,000 men who completed their engagement. Those figures showed a net waste of 24,000 men in the year 1904. In 1905 the waste was as bad as in 1904, there being a net loss of over 20,000. That was a very serious thing. Surely this very costly system should at least give some efficiency and some guarantee against such a tremendous loss from immaturity and other causes. He believed the size of the Army was responsible for the great loss. Every soldier cost the country £100 a year, and the size and cost were in direct relation. But the size and efficiency of the Army were also in direct relation, because so long as we enlisted men who were not at the moment of value as a military power and who could never become of any use, so long would the system continue to be extravagant and wasteful. Therefore, if there was to be any satisfactory reform in the Army, it must take the direction of the reduction of the size of the Army and an extension of the period for which the men served. The normal period now was seven years with the Colours and five with the Reserve. If one took 150,000 infantry of the line, which was approximately their present force, and assumed that they served on the basis of seven years with the Colours and five with the Reserve, it would be found that theoretically we should require 21,500 recruits. If the period with the colours were nine years instead of seven it would be found that a similar force could be maintained by 16,500, or a difference of 5,000 recruits. It was obvious therefore that the longer the War Office made the term of service the smaller they made the demand on the recruiting market. It seemed to him that on the acceptance of that fact must rest to a great extent any improvement in the *status* and quality of the recruits. Of course it would be said that the system of nine years with the colours, leaving only three years in the Reserve, gave very much too small a Reserve. He observed that the Reserve on the nine years system was only 49,000 as against 107,000 on the other side, but what was there in the period of twelve years which was so sacred? Why was it that the system of Reserve service should be confined rigidly to twelve years? Why not fifteen years service? With a fifteen years service, soldiers would serve nine years with the colours and six with the Reserves, and we should get 99,000 Reservists against 107,000, and the number of recruits would remain the same—that was to say, 16,500. It seemed to him that if the Secretary of State for War was to improve the quality of his Army he would be obliged to accept as a permanency a period of nine years with the colours. He did not know that nine years with the colours was intended by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon to be permanent, but if improvement was to be made the longer period of service with the colours would have to be definitely adopted. This applied to the present force, but some hon. Members hoped very strongly that the Secretary of State for War would see his way to reduce the sum total of the force borne on the Estimates. Was that reduction possible? He thought it was. Where should the reduction take place? Was it to be by a reduction at home or abroad? The reduction he believed would take the shape of a reduction in the number of battalions. It seemed clear that anyone who believed in the doctrine of the blue water school, or any doctrine of that kind, would take the view that the requirements for the defence of our shores from invasion would permit us to effect a very considerable reduction in the home force. If they could reduce the infantry of the Line by 50,000 men, mainly from the home establishment, so that they had only to provide 100,000 instead of 150,000 men, and if they adopted the principle of nine years with the colours and six years with the Reserve, they would only need 11,000 recruits annually. There would then be a probability of a real improvement in the class of recruits received, and if they went further and gave a pension after long service then he thought they might with confidence expect to get men at twenty years of age of high character, who would not desert, and who would not have to be put in prison. His point was that if we had a smaller Army and a longer period of service with that colours we would be able to get a better class of recruits, and to get rid of those men whom we must enlist now, although the recruiting sergeants and medical officers knew that they would never be of any value to the State as a military asset. What would become of the linked battalion system if we were to have a smaller Army? It was clear that the equipoise, which was something like a fiction at present, would be totally destroyed. The system called in War Office circles "On short tour," by which the force serving in the Mediterranean were supposed to be on the home establishment, might be said to have saved the face of the linked battalion equipoise in the past, but if there was a further considerable reduction of the battalions in England, it seemed to him that no extension of the system of counting South Africa or any other place abroad as a home station would enable the War Office to keep up the linked battalion equipose. That would disappear, and he did not know but that it would be a very good thing. It had been a greater stumbling block to successive Secretaries of State than almost anything else. The linked battalion system would, under these conditions, have to go altogether, and we should have to rely on the depot system; but the number of drafts would be much smaller. It would then not be a long step to a long-service Army. He did not know whether the Secretary of State was prepared to take that step, but it was the logical outcome of the considerations which the recruiting problem had forced upon the minds of those who had given it a great deal of attention. Surely there was a *prima facie* case for this proposal. He thought the Secretary of State should at least undertake to show why this was an impossible system. Its frank adoption would be an enormous economy. A reduction of one-third of the Army in all its branches must mean a similar reduction in its cost, or a saving on the estimated cost of the Army next year, exclusive of auxiliaries, of £9,000,000, and it would only need a sum of £4,000,000 properly and wisely spent on the development of the Militia to enable us to count on a good and efficient second line of defence. Of course there was the question of pensions. One thing was certain—India would be prepared to pay her share. Further, there would be a much smaller number of men coming out of the Army than under the present system, and those men might, to a great extent, be absorbed into Government employment. If those two facts were considered, the difficulty of pension of which so much was made as against a long-service Army would be found to be greatly exaggerated. He was glad to be associated with his hon. and gallant friend in this matter, and he hoped the House would see its way to support the Motion, for beyond doubt on the question of recruiting the whole possibilities of any efficiency and economy depended.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That under the present system large numbers of men are recruited for the regular infantry who cannot become efficient soldiers, while at the same time it is found difficult to obtain the number placed on the Estimates; and that, in the opinion of this House, an amendment of the existing system is urgently required." —(*Major Seely.*)

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon) remarked upon the fact that when such a subject as this, which was of vital importance, and which affected expenditure perhaps more than any other question discussed this session, was brought before the House it excited the interest of Members to a markedly less degree than many questions which appeared, to him at least, to be of slight importance. He was glad that the hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division had given the House an opportunity of discussing a problem which he truly said was at the foundation of a great part, at all events, of the whole Army problem, for he was interested to hear how soon and how close the hon. Gentleman and his seconder had come to the view he had always maintained, and which he believed to offer the solution of the Army problem. He would not, however, enter into controversial matters. He himself wished to say a few words on the matter, not because for a short time he had been connected with the War Department, but because for twenty-five years he had been a very close student of the question of recruiting and had endeavoured to make himself acquainted with the problem not only as it appeared on paper, but also in flesh and blood. He both agreed and disagreed with the hon. and gallant Member. He did not agree that there was a failure to obtain the number of recruits required; but he did agree that the system under which they were obtained and the method by which they were applied were capable of a great deal of amendment. Some main facts in regard to recruiting were not understood as they ought to be. Quantity we had, but quality we had not; and we were not applying what we had in the most economical and effective manner. The statement that there was a falling off in recruiting last year required great qualification. The total falling off during the year ending December 31st, 1905, was 4,600 men; but that was compared with the largest recruiting year ever experienced in time of peace, and when it was remembered that the recruiting in the latter year was accompanied by the largest number of rejections for unfitness ever experienced they would probably have the view which he entertained that the past year was one of the most profitable recruiting years known. The hon. Member for Cardiff had spoken of the lamentable waste of men. A very large proportion of that waste was in young soldiers who ought never to have been enlisted. Last year the Army refused to take those men. There was a screwing up of the terms of physical qualification such as had never been known before, and the result was that during the summer months there was a very marked reduction in the number of results attested owing to this raising of the physical standard. He ventured now to prophesy that that action would be followed by a smaller amount of waste from the Army in subsequent years than there had been for many a long day. His experience went back to the Admiralty as well as to the War Office, and he well remembered that when they introduced the enforcement of characters for the Royal Marines—a step afterwards followed in the Army, though perhaps not so rigidly as in the Navy—the rejections in the Royal Marines fell 90 per cent. in six months and he was quite confident that if they extended that plan of increasing the rejections before the men got into the ranks they would have far fewer rejections from the Army and far less expenditure.

Did the House realise how many men were really giving military service to the Crown? At the present time no fewer than 960,000 were serving and drawing pay, directly or indirectly, from this country every year for service in the Navy, Army, Militia, Volunteers and the Royal Irish Constabulary, and this in time of peace. It constituted a tremendous draft on the population of the country, and if it were the case that it could not be made to meet the actual need then the House would have to consider very carefully the proposition which had been so often urged on them of compulsory service, which he for his part devoutly hoped might long be postponed and indeed altogether avoided. In 1904 the actual number of men raised for the Army and Militia was 77,335. If he deducted from that the men who passed from the Militia to the Regular Army, the net result would be about 63,000 men. How many men did we want? A very simple answer could be given. The hon. Member for Cardiff had truly said that the longer the period of service the smaller the demand for recruiting. But he only indicated very briefly, and by implication only, that to have a purely long-service Army would necessitate a short-service Army also under another name. They might call it a short-service Army or they might call it a Militia, as they pleased. The hon. Member had asked why we could not have a purely short-service Army; He would tell him. On the basis of the Army as it now stood they would not have enough to mobilise in time of war, much less to supply the waste of war when it had begun. If they reduced the quantity of the Army, they would reduce the Reserve to an absolutely negligible amount, and therefore it was necessary to have some other source from which to supply the Reserve. If they increased the length of service from two to three years they would have a large margin of recruits available, and if they increased the number of long-service battalions they would diminish the demand for recruits. At present there were enough to meet the real demands for the battalions in India. Under the long-service system 110 to 120 men were required annually for each battalion there. Under our present system that demand was enormously exaggerated. To furnish 104 long-service battalions and seventy-one short service with two years training, there were required 19,600 men for short service and 12,000 for long service. If the service were for three years, the number required would be 12,000 long and 13,150 short service, or 4,600 less than the recruits actually taken for the Regular Infantry alone in 1904. Thus without impinging on the Militia they would on the basis of two years short service with their present recruiting strength obtain the whole number required with the exception of 4,000 men, while if they increased the length of the service from two to three years they would have a large margin of recruits available. There was an ample recruiting reserve at present if only our resources were properly utilised. The difficulty was not the number but the quality of the recruits, and that was mainly a question of how they dealt with the men they had got. The terms of service were not the trouble. The Army now was a very good career while the man was serving. The pay was high, the feeding good, and the conditions under which the soldier lived were excellent. But they had to face the fact that we were not getting for the expenditure all that the country had a right to demand. It was not a radical revolution that was required at all. There were a great many men serving the country in other branches of the Army who were entirely satisfied with the terms they obtained, and there were excellent men filling those branches. Moreover, they could obtain men for the Navy, for the Royal Marines, for the constabulary and the police on terms which, so far as money went, were not greatly superior to those which were offered to the infantry of the Line. But there were other considerations which deserved the consideration of the Secretary of State. He would warn him against too literally accepting the opinions of officers on one point. There was no army in the world where the association between officers and men was closer or the feeling better than in our own; but he believed that the officers, by reason of living so long in contact with one state of things, were slow to recognise how the world was changing outside the ranks of the Army, and were sometimes prone to give advice which, if accepted, would make us slow in altering the conditions of Army service to keep pace with the conditions of civil life The barrack accommodation was bad. Improvement there had been, but it was in no way commensurate with the expenditure. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had suspended the experiment which he desired to see tried of building barracks designed by the Director of Barrack Construction, the same architect who designed the great Rowton houses. Then there was the question of improving the amenities of barrack life. He had seen recruits examined and tested, numbers of men and boys standing stripped for an hour in one room. There was probably no class of society in which a man or boy, on entering on his career, would like to find himself associated for an hour under those circumstances, with a number of strange men and boys. Steps were taken immediately to alter the practice. That was one of the small things which effected outside views of the position of the soldier. He believed it might be possible to allow old soldiers to live in their own homes or in lodgings instead of in barracks, but in the interests of discipline this would not be reasonable for boys or young soldiers. But probably the most important matter of all was the employment of soldiers on discharge. That was the great key of the problem. What a man wanted when he went into the Army was not the chance of charity but the assurance of employment. The thing could be done, but in one way only. He believed that by reducing the number of men who were taken for long service, by extending the period of service, and by giving to the men who had engaged for long service the opportunity of prolonging their career in the Army at home, by retaining them for the instruction of those who had engaged for a period not so long, they would go far to solve this problem. He believed the problem was not an insoluble one. It was not a question of numbers. It was a question of dealing with the men when they had them, and of appropriating them to the purposes for which they were required. He had said that the greatest difficulty of all was the want of employment at the end of a soldier's service with the colours. But he was not sure that the attitude of the House was not a still greater difficulty. He had always felt that it was lamentable that the Army should be spoken of in the House as it very often was. They too often heard it talked of as a sort of necessary evil, a thing to be tolerated and accepted because they could not for the moment get rid of it, but he had very seldom—well, he would not say very seldom, but he had not always—heard it talked of as what he believed it to be—one of the most important branches of service in the country. He could not express to the House the sense he had always felt, in dealing with Army matters, of the difficulty created by the want on the part of hon. Members of sympathy for the Army as a great service. He believed nothing did the Army more harm than the refusal to give it the same appreciation and sympathy and good will that was accorded to the Navy. He believed the Army was worthy of that sympathy and good will; and, if they could have a new and happier tone imparted into discussions about the *personnel* of the Army under the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, he believed it would be repaid over and over again. If they made the service popular he believed their difficulties would vanish, and that the Army would be cheaper, more easily recruited, and more effective in war.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): I think the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down takes a somewhat too gloomy view of the attitude of the House of Commons towards the Army. I know there are many, and there always will be many, who chafe under the burden and the curse of war. But they recognise that the Army is there, not through any fault of its own, but through the defects of human nature; and so long as those defects exist, and so long as it is necessary to make provision for national defence, then our Army is a thing of which we ought, in so far as we can, to be proud. That being so, I believe that this debate illustrates a growth in healthy tone as regards the Army. Nobody who has listened to the speeches could fail to be conscious of the recognition on all hands of the great fact that there is a large social problem connected with the Army. You cannot have and maintain a body of men so enormous as this in your midst, sending out from itself discharged soldiers and taking in men who are to become soldiers, without its profoundly affecting the health and well-being of the social organism. And, therefore, the maintenance of the level of the common soldier is something which concerns us not merely as interested in military affairs, but as interested in the social health of the nation at large. I was very glad to recognise in every speech that has been made a growing consciousness, I think it is, of that fact. We all feel that it is an obligation, not merely of policy, but of conscience, to try to make the lot of the soldier better than it is. We all respond to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman and to the appeals which fell from the hon. and gallant Gentleman and the hon. Member who sits behind him. We all feel the force of those appeals—that we should address ourselves to the task of trying to make the career of the private who enters the Army a better one than it is at the present time. It is quite true that the system which we possess is disorganised in many respects and chaotic. It is quite true that a man who is taken into a very searching employment at eighteen and kept until he is twenty-seven and then sent out to search for civil employment competes at a disadvantage, and that we owe it to him that we should do everything in our power especially to assist him on whom we rely and have to rely for so much, and to whom we are under so deep a national obligation. Therefore, I was glad to see in all the speeches the recognition of that obligation as regards employment. There is no doubt that progress, substantial progress, is being made in that direction. Much remains yet to be done. We have a Committee sitting at the War Office just now upon this subject, and the information which it is collecting is useful and valuable information. But I think the main discoveries are rather that there is much to be done than that all things have been accomplished that are to be accomplished. There has been the want of organisation, the want of an attempt to bring into harmony the conditions of life and service of the soldier with the conditions of life and service when he passes from the Regular ranks into the Reserve. These questions are open. There is one method to which allusion has been made to-night which is of importance. I mean the chance that there is of teaching to the soldier some sort of trade. That is a thing which we have never taken up. It has been done in the Navy. Anybody who goes on board a training ship, anybody who has been on board the "Vernon," for instance, is familiar with the spectacle of the naval officer teaching the sailors, it may be, very often it is, electrical theory and the application of electrical theory to practice, and the result is that when the sailor leaves the Navy he becomes a person who is sought after for employment as an electrician, as a chauffeur, or whatever it may be. This systematic process of teaching is not so easy in the Army. In the first place, most of the time of the young recruit requires to be devoted to the perfecting of himself in his military education. But then, after that, he is moved; he goes abroad, he is constantly being shifted, and it is not easy to get that large amount of training that one could desire in those branches of special knowledge. But the thing is possible, and a commencement has been made. I am glad to think that the indications are all that this will increase, that the beginnings already accomplished will be carried further, so that I am not without hope that substantial progress may be made in the teaching to the soldier of something which may enable him the better to seek for employment when he passes into the Reserve. Then there is another topic which was taken up by the right hon. Gentleman and also by other speakers. That is the state of recruiting. They pointed to the figures, which, I admit, although I think they have been somewhat unduly magnified to-night, show the state of recruiting, and they said, "The state is very significant; recruiting is falling off; people do not care to come into the Army as they did before." The right hon. Gentleman afterwards made some criticism upon the figures given and the arguments used, which, I think, were not without force. It is quite true that recruiting for the infantry of the Line has fallen off very much, but then it is plain, when you look at the statistics, that it is because recruiting for every other arm has gone up, and it will be found when the time comes for closing down the recruiting for other arms that the recruiting for the Line is very much what it was in the past if not a little better. I have here some figures which have not yet been published, giving the results of recruiting according to the weekly Returns up to date. The House is in possession of the Report, to which reference has been made, giving the figures up to the end of September last, but the figures I am going to refer to are since then. I am going to take from October 1st, 1904, to April 21st, 1905, and compare that with October 1st, 1905, to April 21st, 1906. Taking that period last year the recruiting for the infantry was 14,422. The recruiting for all arms was 21,437. Taking the same period in 1905–6, the recruiting for the infantry shows the very serious falling off of nearly 3,000. It fell to 11,444. But the recruiting for all arms, including infantry, rose to 21,611, as against 21,437 in the previous year. That is due to the desire to enter the cavalry and artillery in preference to the infantry, those two being always the rather more popular and slightly better-paid arms. But as recruiting for these arms is somewhat closed down, which it will be when things are at a normal level, then I think it will be found that recruiting for the infantry of the Line will revert to its normal condition. It is very curious that there seems to be a solid mass of material out of which recruiting for the Army takes place. It is curious how nearly constant it is. It suggests to one that there is a class of young man, perhaps about eighteen, who may not find himself very well circumstanced, who may have found that fortune buffeted him rather hard, who may have found it not very easy to get into a trade, and he goes into the Army. It is quite true that we should like to feel that the Army was such an attractive position that we got the very cream. But we get some very good men, although we get some rather rough ones; and the effect of the system is, I think, undoubtedly that those who may be very unfortunate when they recruit may become different creatures altogether after a time. With one thing which the right hon. Gentleman opposite did I most cordially agree—he raised the standard. The percentage of medical rejections has gone up. That is not altogether an evil in regard to recruiting, because it stopped the leakage at the other end. Reference was made by my hon. and gallant friend, the Member for the Abercromby Division, to the wastage, and it is very interesting to follow out the figures, which are curious. To begin with, there may be said to be three great causes of wastage, there is "not likely to make efficient soldiers"—the technical description, there is misconduct, and there is miscellaneous. One is very apt, looking at the recent figures from the beginning of 1905, to be misled by the first heading. My hon. and gallant friend noticed, I think, that the number had increased to 1,822 as against 1,373 in the previous year. Well, there is a reason for that, and it is that a new system was brought into operation; instead of the depôt being, as it used to be, under the charge of a colonel who was responsible for sending out whoever was supposed to be inefficient and was responsible only to the commander-in-chief of the district, the new system, brought about by the changes suggested in the Esher Committee Report and sanctioned by this House, is that the regiments are grouped. There is a major in charge of the depôt, the major is under control of the brigadier, and he is a very much more strict person to deal with than the old-fashioned colonel and old-fashioned commander-in-chief. The result was that they raised the percentage at first, but it is because they did not lose at the other end. In the most recent statistics it is striking to notice the improvement, which, I think, goes through the Army as a whole. I take the same five months I took before, the period at the end of 1905 and the beginning of 1906. Taking the latest figures, the invalids were 1,692, as compared with 1,341 this year. There, I think, I can trace the beneficent operation of the right hon. Gentleman's stiffening of the medical tests. As to those not likely to make efficient soldiers, they began to sink this year, and were 666, as compared with 713 in the year before. As to misconduct, there has been a drop, comparing 1904–5 with 1905–6, from 1,306 to 955. The fact is that all through the Army there is distinct evidence that a social movement has set in. Take temperance. Nothing is more striking than the number of times, when you walk down among the men and ask them what they take, that you get the answer "Kops" That indicates a striking change of attitude, and that expression may be heard still more often in the future than in the past. There is no doubt that the cause of Army temperance is advancing. Better education, better conditions, a great improvement, I think, in the zeal and earnestness of the officers—and the South African War has been a stimulating influence among our officers—all these things are combining to improve the social level of the Army. Although there is much to do, and I am the last person to say that things are as they should be, I do recognise that things are better than they have been. It rests with us to make them better still. My hon. friend behind me travelled into a very debateable region, and touched on the great question whether you could not improve things more by adopting a new Army system. Perhaps he is right; but the topic of controversy is so enormous that if we were to enter on it our proceedings would be very much lengthened. The right hon. Gentleman opposite administered a gentle rebuke to my hon. friend as to long service. "Why," he asked, "did you not accept my system of two Armies, of long and short service?" Thereby hangs a tale, and I leave it to the conscience of my hon. friends who form what is termed the Army group in this House to reconcile it to themselves why they did not accept that proposition of the right hon. Member for Croydon. At any rate, I feel that the Member for Croydon in touching on it really gave the answer to my hon. friend the Member for Cardiff, because he showed that the question opened up was so enormous that really it could not be discussed within the compass of this debate. Moreover, I doubt whether it is really germane to the Motion, except, so far, perhaps, as it affects recruiting by the temptation to enter on a soldier's career. I can only, therefore, make the briefest observation on it. Suppose you have a long service Army, the first question is, What is it going to cost you? That lies at the root of the matter. My hon. friend thought he saw his way to the saving of£9,000,000. I should be very much obliged to him if he helped me to that; but he did not develop the way in which that could really be brought about. Let me point out that I think there is great force in the contention of the right hon. Gentleman that you cannot have a long-service Army without a short-service Army too. We have tried a long-service Army in this country; we tried very hard, and turned from it at last with a shudder. It was the greatest failure, I think, of all the things we have ever had. I fancy the point of my hon. friend was that you were to have a long-service Army because you were to furnish a career to the soldier for life, which would relieve him of the necessity of looking for civil employment, and leave him with a pension.

MR. GUEST said he meant that if there was a longer service, a smaller demand would be made on the recruiting market, and a better class of recruits would be got.

MR. HALDANE: Is that so? The medical statistics show that the invalided cases increase to an appalling extent, particularly in tropical countries, and past the age of thirty, under the present system. With the old soldier, moreover, you had an amount of wastage which we do not get under the present system. And how are you to get the men for long service?

MR. GUEST: We can get them now for nine years.

MR. HALDANE: But my hon. friend wants more than nine years, and you certainly must go further than that if you are to tide the soldier over the period now spent in civil employment to his pension. You cannot give men a pension after nine years, at least I should not like to be responsible for the Army Estimates if you did. What you want is men below thirty for the Army; after that, experience shows you get wastage. The ideal system would seem to be one of turning out men at that age, and securing if you can civil employment for them; and by dint of reorganisation I think a good deal may be done in that direction. But again I ask, how are you to get the men for this long service? Are you going to recruit them at twenty-one? Why at twenty-one a man is married and has a family. The exception only proves the rule. At twenty-one if a man is ever going to get any occupation he has got it, the best men have got it, and men without occupation at that age would be men of a lower class than the men without occupation at eighteen. When you send a man out who is married you send his wife and children out, and schoolmasters to teach them, and you must do that to a much greater extent under those conditions. And then you send him out to, it may be, a tropical country which does not suit a man above that age.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.) asked how were men of twenty-one recruited in other countries.

MR. HALDANE: They get them, under the conscript system, by taking them by the neck and bringing them in. If that system were proposed in this country I am afraid it would lead to a great deal of trouble. What we require is an Army to serve abroad in tropical lands. You cannot get an Army to serve abroad under conscription. But the question between long service and short service was wisely left outside the Motion by my hon. and gallant friend who moved it. There were other topics to which he alluded that deserve the close consideration of the House; and if this Motion had assumed the form of urging the improvement of the social condition of the soldier with a view not only of facilitating recruiting, but of making the career of the soldier better than it is, I should gladly have accepted it and have had it placed on record as the opinion of this House of Commons. The House will see that I am not unsympathetic towards the spirit which has animated my hon. and gallant friend in moving this Motion or the purpose which he has in view. Indeed I agree with that purpose. But I think the terms proposed go too far, that the Motion is not worded precisely in the form which would best express the opinions which we all entertain more or less, and I should certainly desire to see the Motion a little more closely drafted before accepting it.

*CAPTAIN KINCAID SMITH (Warwickshire, Stratford-upon-Avon) moved as an Amendment to the Motion to add at the end—

"And any such Amendment should include the introduction of physical drill of a military character in our schools."

He thought that in spite of what the right hon. Gentleman had said there would be few hon. Members who would not be to a certain extent in agreement with the Resolution of the hon. Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool. If the Resolution had been less vague, and had contained some definite proposition, he for one would have hesitated in placing an Amendment on the Paper. The hon. Member's speech was principally a plea for giving the soldier a life career. He thought they were all in favour of that, but was there any prospect of adopting it after what the right hon. Gentleman had said? He could not gather that the hon. Member for the Abercromby Divison had put forward any solution of this difficult military problem. Taking into consideration that the question of recruiting was very difficult, and also that no small improvement in the pay of the private soldier or slight improvement in his surroundings was likely to result in obtaining a better class of recruits, he asked the House to express approval of the principle that no alteration in the present system of recruiting was likely to produce any useful result, unless they introduced at the same time in the schools a system of military training up to the age of eighteen. Such a system was advocated by that great soldier, Lord Roberts. It would produce a vast reserve—a male population which in any national emergency would provide a number of men who after a few months training would be fit to take their places either alongside or against Continental armies. It was idle to jump to the conclusion that this was conscription in disguise. All that was advocated was that the usual school exercises should be supplemented by others of a more distinctive military character. What harm could it do a boy to be able to walk straight and handle a rifle? He was as much against conscription as any hon. Member in the House. Conscription was impossible in this country for many reasons, but he would mention only two—it would not provide the Army for India, and it was unnecessary for home service. There was only one argument in favour of conscription, and that was that where there was such difficulty in procuring work for our soldiers after their period of service, under conscription every man would be on a level in the labour market. That was the great difficulty—to provide work. The right hon. Gentleman had said there was a Committee sitting on this question, but personally he believed their labours would never solve the problem. He did not think they would ever provide a scheme by which men who became soldiers because they could not find work would be able to find work when they left the colours. Those who came from the casual labour market, and unfortunately they were the majority, were not likely to be any more fitted for obtaining employment on leaving the colours. No scheme was ever likely to solve that knotty problem. There was an idea to teach soldiers whilst serving with the colours, but he was told that this was impossible except in the case of a few. Some hon. Members might laugh at his suggestion of military training up to the age of eighteen, but in a day of national calamity they might be forced to adopt real conscription. He was confident, however, that their masters would never consent to conscription except after the most appalling disaster—in fact when the word "war" meant the same thing to the quiet little country village in this country as it did to the little village on a European frontier. We should teach our youth that war was harmful, but we should teach them at the same time that they could not have peace by hoping for it and being unprepared for war. They should also be taught that it was the duty of all to do a little towards fitting themselves to take their place in a national emergency. If we had military training up to the age of eighteen we should have a large male population able with a little training to face a Continental army. There was a great danger in pushing too far the doctrine of quality merely. He believed that in a European war expert efficiency would not win the day over great odds. If the State was to undertake the responsibility of feeding school children, they should require more time to be given to the service of the State. The Minister for War had won golden opinions from all sides, because so far he had done nothing. The right hon. Gentleman had negotiated no great reform, but if the words of the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer meant anything it was that the Minister for War would do something next year. If, however, he relied on his present material he was predoomed to failure. Probably his military advisers, if they had not told him so outright, had hinted at it. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would say that the policy Lord Roberts was advocating would receive full and sympathetic consideration from the Government. If hon. Members hesitated to support this Amendment, it would be because they feared the difficulty of persuading an infinitesimal proportion of their masters, the electors, that this was not the first step towards conscription, but the only policy which stood between this country and conscription. He begged to move.

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) in seconding the Amendment, said that the mere fact that the scheme of Lord Roberts emanated from a distinguished soldier must, *prima facie*, recommend it to the favourable notice of the House. Looking at the subject as a practical soldier, he believed that a knowledge of military drill among our youth must conduce very much to the safety of the country. Not only would its acquisition by the young men of the country tend to make the Army as an institution more widely respected, but it was a valuable means of physical training, especially for the time when these young men became soldiers. The preliminary training in the elements of drill, and in habits of obedience to authority and discipline was a factor of the greatest importance in making soldiers; and therefore the proposal of the hon. Member was one which he had the greatest pleasure in seconding. In looking at the question of recruiting, he asserted that the point they had to attend to in order to get men into the Army was to provide something for them at the end of their training. He remembered on one occasion marching with his company at the time the short service system was introduced and when recruits were difficult to get. He put a question to a colour-sergeant as to what was the reason for the falling-off in recruiting. He asked whether it was the foreign service or the long service that they did not like, and whether in his opinion recruiting would be better when the service was shortened. His reply was that the men did not mind either foreign or long service, but what they did want was something to look forward to at the end of their service. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would do all he could to bring about that result. If men were to be asked to give the cream of their lives in the service of the country the House was bound in return to provide the training by which these men might be enabled to maintain themselves as skilled labourers when they left the Army. In the depôts there should be a system of enlistment for boys similar to that which prevailed in the Navy. At the end of the five or six years of their boys' service the youths should be received as trained soldiers into the ranks of the Army; but during those five or six years in the depôts the lads should be taught the elements of a handicraft, so that when they left the Army they would be able to take their places in civil life as men who could handle tools and earn their livelihood as skilled workmen. He believed that the House of Commons was beginning to see the necessity for having an efficient and contented Army, and it was not satisfied with the spectacle which was too often seen, of men who had given the best part of their lives to the service of their country ending their days in the workhouse or asking for alms in the street. That, in his opinion, was a national disgrace. In conclusion he hoped that the Secretary of State for War would seriously consider his suggestion that boys should be enlisted for the Army in the same way as they entered the Navy.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end, to add the words 'and any such Amendment should include the introduction of physical drill of a military character in our schools.'"—(*Captain Kincaid-Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) hoped that the Amendment would be withdrawn. [Cries of "No."] The Secretary of State had made an offer which ought to be accepted. It was most desirable that the House should place on record that it was deeply concerned, not only with the soldier in the ranks, but with his after career. The Amendment was not relevant to the Resolution, and was of so far-reaching a character that it ought to be debated separately and fully. The original Motion was to call attention to the state of recruiting for the Army, but this Amendment introduced a suggestion that there should be physical drill of a military character in the schools, and he thought it was the opinion of a great majority of hon. Members that that was undesirable. That was a subject of such far-reaching effect that it ought not to be brought up at the fag end of a discussion, but should be seriously argued at sufficient length upon a proper occasion. Both from a tactical and strategical point of view he hoped the Amendment would be withdrawn. To say that there ought to be physical drill in a school was to state something which was already accepted by the education authority, and everybody interested in education agreed that the physical development of the body must go along with the intellectual development of the mind. He did not see why they should tack on to that the question of the drill in the schools assuming a military character. He had always taken a deep interest in the Volunteer movement and they got the Volunteers at the early age of seventeen. The Amendment raised a very important subject, and he hoped it would be withdrawn in order that they might arrive at the important decision to which the Secretary of State for War had assented.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow) said that for the last three years the experiment had been tried in the elementary school in the district in which he resided of teaching the children to shoot with a single bullet, and also to shoot in teams and to shoot quickly. He thought that would be a great advantage to them in future if they were ever called upon to serve their country. He thought that all the boys ought to be trained to shoot with a single bullet, and they ought to be given a certain amount of military drill. The expense was trifling, and the thing once learnt would never be forgotten.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton) said that some people seemed to think that the schools were only brought into existence for the benefit of the drill sergeant and the parson. Military drill in schools was vicious in practice and wrong in principle. If we needed an Army for the defence of the country it would have to be obtained by different methods. If hon. Gentlemen on both sides wanted to know the best means of getting recruits from the better section of the working classes he would give it in a nutshell. It would be necessary to make promotion in the Army free from top to bottom. The upper ranks should not be the exclusive possession of those who had wealth, position, and influence. They should do away with monopoly entirely, and the man who had earned a position in the higher ranks as an officer should get it. There was another sweeping reform required, and that was to see that the expenses of officers in the mess room approximated to the pay which the officers received. It was a perfect scandal at present that the higher ranks of the Army should be looked upon by a certain section of the community merely as their right and privilege.

MR. HALDANE indicated dissent.

MR. SEDDON said the right hon. Gentleman shook his head. He had read——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must confine himself to the Motion or the Amendment.

MR. SEDDON said he was going to speak against the Amendment. He wanted to give an illustration from the working class point of view of what would be an inducement to enter and remain in the Army. The soldier should receive a wage approximating to that which could be earned in skilled trades, and his social position should be improved. If they made the Army a well-paid profession, if they improved the conditions of the soldier's life, if they created not merely a military spirit but a love of country, they would give all the incentive which was required in order to obtain the men wanted for the defence of the country. So far as hon. Members below the gangway were concerned, they repudiated entirely the idea of giving a military training in the schools as a means towards the defence of the country. All they asked was that the authorities at the War Office should treat the soldier as a man, and give him conditions approximating to those enjoyed by the better classes engaged in industrial pursuits, and they should show him that when approved by service he would be able to enter the upper ranks. When he became an officer he should not be blackmailed by those who had been pitchforked into similar positions. Complaints were often made that men who rose from the ranks could not live on their pay, and very often it was made clear to them in the mess room that their room was preferred to their company. [Cries of "No, no!" and "Hear, hear!"] Yes, everybody had heard about "ragging" in the Army, and, if rumour was to be credited, a certain great officer who had risen from the ranks had a miserable time before he put an end to his existence. If fair conditions were given in the Army there would be no lack of men ready to defend their native country.

*DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): said he had listened with a sort of sympathy to the hon. and gallant Member who moved the Amendment. He was obviously inspired by great courage. The hon. Member desired peace, he said, and therefore we must be prepared for war. But by his proposal he would so inflame the minds of the people that war would be made inevitable. The hon. Member sat for Stratford upon-Avon. Consequently he would agree with him when he quoted the words—

> "How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done."

He proposed to take a very severely practical view of the proposal before the House, because as a matter of fact the proposal to give military training to the children in the schools had actually been in operation. Not so long ago when the noble Lord the President of the Council in the late Government came into office he was keenly anxious for universal physical training in the schools; he went to the War Office and got a manual prepared with the object of securing that end. The manual was prepared as a model course of physical training for all the children in the public elementary schools in the country. When the hon. Member saw the manual he recognised that somebody had written what amounted to a *réchauffé* of the early part of the soldier's red-book. For two or three years this course was inflicted on the children, the facing about, turning, and fours forming, and other military movements were practised, and the whole system was hopelessly wrong and cruel to the children. Nothing could have been worse for them than this military drill. The great bulk of it had to do with legs and arms. There were no breathing exercises, and no exercises for the muscles of the neck, sides, and abdomen. After the manual was issued he invited the then Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Education to come into the lobby and show him how the prescribed exercises were done, and the hon. Gentleman respectfully declined. It was only necessary at that time to describe what was put into the teachers' hands to show how hopelessly absurd and grotesque the manual was for the proper physical training of children. That book, having passed out of existence, it was an easy task for the Board of Education in its wiser moments to prepare a good eclectic system of scientific physical training largely taken from the Swedish drill, and more was not needed. He would certainly oppose the Amendment. What was wanted was that every youth of the age of from eighteen to twenty should be compelled to give two hours on two nights in each week to physical training under municipal auspices. He would add to that—and he said this with fear and trembling, for he was far from advocating anything in the nature of conscription—at the close of this training, a training in the use of the rifle, for he held the old-fashioned view that everybody ought to be trained to carry arms. But the square-toed, stiff, ramrod, military training was entirely unsuited at any time to school children.

*CAPTAIN KINCAID-SMITH asked leave to withdraw his Amendment. [Cries of "No."]

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said he intervened to express regret that the Amendment had been moved because it appeared to him to be somewhat irrelevant. He also desired to repudiate the expressions which had fallen from the hon. Member for North Camberwell as to the action of the Board of Education in regard to physical training. He remembered that the hon. Member made a somewhat inflammatory speech on the subject, but he repudiated the suggestion that the hon. Member invited him to give an example of the exercises or that he declined to accept the invitation. It was true that the model course for physical training in 1903 contained some military terms, though as regards the training given it was satisfactory. The matter was carefully looked into, and the military phraseology was removed from the book, but the physical training remained practically the same throughout the elementary schools. The question raised by the Amendment affected all schools and required much more careful consideration than could be given to it in a debate of this character. The President of the Board of Education ought to be present to express his opinion as to the possibility of carrying out what was suggested in the Amendment.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said he understood from his hon. friend the Member for Stratford-on-Avon that he did not propose anything in the nature of physical training such as the hon. Member for North Camberwell had described. He believed he had in his mind that class of physical training which everybody in the House would admit was good. The Persians in old times taught their children to ride, shoot, and speak the truth, and if they were less particular in modern times on the third point, it was none the less an excellent programme. All agreed that grown up boys should be taught the use of the rifle. He had known an excellent game shot who, when he took up a rifle with a 5lb. or 7lb. pull, could not hit the target. It was easy without practice in the use of a service rifle, not only to pull the sight off the target, but off the mound behind the target, or even the mountain behind the mound. There were matters raised by this Motion into which he should have liked to enter had there been time. [Cries of "Divide."] He had not the slightest intention of ceasing to speak until he was called to order by the Chair, and had in fact had less than five minutes in which to address the House. He wished to bring before the House the question of capitation charges.

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

ALIENS BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow.

SEAMEN'S AND SOLDIERS' FALSE CHARACTERS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1:

Question again proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Committee report progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at Ten minutes after Eleven o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, May 3rd, 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

The Earl of Morley sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bute (English and Welsh) Estates Bill [H.L.].—Judges' Report received; Bill presented, and read 1^a.

Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Morley be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Ravensworth; read and agreed to.

Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill. Read 2^a, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Dowlais Gas Bill; Merthyr Tydfil Gas Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Manchester Churches Bill [H.L]; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.]; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.] Kent Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone, Sandgate and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2.) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz:—D. Wellington, E. Mayo, V. Falmouth, L. Suffield, L. Brougham and Vaux (Chairman); agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday next at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 62).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Charing Gas, Chichester Gas, Corsham Gas, Farnham Gas, and Kings Lynn Gas.

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 63).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Newport Pagnell Gas, Pontardulais Gas, Raunds Gas, Redditch Gas, and Saint Austell Gas.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. (No. 64).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Bolsover and District Water, Great Grimsby Gas, Great Grimsby Water, Hoylake and West Kirby Water, Wath-upon-Dearne and District Gas, and Wollaston Gas.

Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. (No. 65).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Herne Bay Water, Maidstone Water, Mid-Kent Water, Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water, Sleaford and District Water and Slough Water.

Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. (No. 66).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Altrincham Urban District Council Tramways, Dewsbury Corporation Tramways, Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Tramways, Ossett Corporation Tramways, Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Port Seaton Extension), and Rochdale Corporation Tramways.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3.) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 67).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts 1882 and 1888, the Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and the Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Bellshill, Blantyre, Bothwell, Dumfermline and District, Dunoon, Fochabers, Inveresk, Shettleston, and Pollcross and Uddingston: And

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4.) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 68.)—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts 1882 and 1888, relating to Aylesbury, Boston, Castleward, Weetslade, and Cramlington, Godalming (Extension), Gomersal, Henley-on-Thames, Pinner, Stanmore, Harrow, Weald, and Edgware, Ryton, Swanage, Wantage and District.—Were presented by the Lord Granard (*E. Granard*); read 1ª; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3571. China (Ichang); No. 3572. Switzerland.

CONGESTED DISTRICT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.

Eighth Annual Report of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board to the Secretary for Scotland.

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES) 1904 (PART II. CIVIL JUDICIAL STATISTICS).

Statistics relating to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the House of Lords, the Supreme Court of Judicature, County Courts and other Civil Courts, edited by Sir John Macdonnell, C.B., LL.D., a Master of the Supreme Court.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1907.

GAS COMPANIES (METROPOLIS).

Accounts of the Metropolitan Gas Companies for the year 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of the maintenance of existing religious teaching in Church of England schools of St. Annes, Clifton ——and Radcliffe, St. Andrews; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

JURORS.

Petition in favour of payment of jurors attending Quarter Sessions; of Justices of the Peace for Essex; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (BUILDING BYE-LAWS) BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order).

(The EARL of ONSLOW in the Chair.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:

LORD DENMAN explained that the Amendment standing in his name to this clause was necessitated by the Bill becoming law at a later date than was originally contemplated. He begged to move.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 40, after ('seven') to insert ('Provided that where the first ordinary poor rate made during the year 1906 was made before the passing of this Act, and the first special rate was not made therewith, then the amount of the instalment payable by any purchaser which would have been leviable by that rate shall be added to the amount of the second instalment payable by him, and the total amount of both instalments shall be levied by the special rate made at the same time as the first ordinary poor rate made during the year 1907.')"—(*Lord Denman.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3, agreed to.

Clause 4:

LORD DENMAN said his Amendment to this clause was little more than a drafting one.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 3, line 16, after ('union') to insert ('and any rate made before the passing of this Act which would have been valid if this Act had previously passed.')"—(*Lord Denman.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to; and Bill reported with Amendments to the House.

Moved, that the Standing Committee be negatived.—(*Lord Denman.*)

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE objected to the proposal to negative the Standing Committee stage. He knew that there were several Members of their Lordships' House anxious to move important Amendments, and he thought the course which the noble Lord in charge of the Bill asked the House to take was a very unusual one. The sending of the Bill to the Standing Committee would cause but a trifling delay.

LORD DENMAN did not think the course he proposed was at all unusual. The Standing Committee stage was frequently negatived in the case of Departmental Bills. The question was one of considerable urgency, because county councils in Ireland were fixing the rate mentioned in the Bill, and it was obviously necessary that they should do so under the law of the country, and that their action should be legalised as soon as possible. He hoped his noble friend on the Cross Benches would see his way to withdraw his objection to the Motion.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE regretted that he could not comply with the request of his noble friend. Several noble Lords who were anxious to move Amendments expected to have the opportunity of doing so in the Standing Committee. The reference of the Bill to the Standing Committee would only mean a delay of five days.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, I hope the House will agree to the Motion which has been submitted by the noble Lord in charge of this Bill. As my noble friend explained on the occasion of the Second Reading, the Bill is to correct errors which have arisen in consequence of the Bill of the late Government not having passed into law through want of time. The object of the Bill is to legalise certain proceedings which have been taken, and which, without the Bill, would not be legal. It is, therefore, a measure of really urgent importance, and I trust your Lordships will agree to the Motion to negative the Standing Committee.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE My Lords, I have no doubt the Bill is a desirable one, and I do not think we on this side of the House have any intention whatever of obstructing its progress. On the other hand, it must be evident to any one who will read it through that it deals with some very technical points, and the noble Lord who sits on the Cross Benches tells your Lordships that he and some of his friends desire that these points should be further examined in Committee. If my noble friend is right in saying that a delay of five days is all that would be involved by the Bill going, in the ordinary course, to the Standing Committee, I must say it seems to me only reasonable that the course which he recommends should be adopted by your Lordships.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): I confess that we on this side of the House are somewhat disappointed at the action taken by the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition. The measure as it stands received the warm approval in another place of Mr. Walter Long, who is thoroughly acquainted with all the facts of the case. In these circumstances I do venture to make one more appeal to the noble Marquess and the Party opposite not to press their opposition to the Motion.

LORD ASHBOURNE said there was not the slightest desire on the part of noble Lords on the Opposition side of the House to cause obstruction. The facts, broadly speaking, had been accurately stated. To the Bill itself there was no opposition, but he gathered from what he had heard that there was a desire to discuss Clause 3. This particular clause had been discussed in the House of Commons, and there was a difference of opinion upon it. Having regard to what had passed, he did not think it unreasonable that there should be some discussion and some ventilation of opinion upon it in their Lordships' House if desired.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I can only speak again by your Lordships' favour, but if you will allow me to do so I would point out that the Bill can be amended without going to the Standing Committee. It can be amended on Report or on Third Reading, Why, therefore, a Bill of this urgency should be delayed by being referred to the Standing Committee I cannot see.

LORD ASHBOURNE agreed as to the power of the House to make Amendments at either of the stages named by the noble Marquess the Lord Privy Seal. He assumed that his noble friend on the Cross Benches only desired that full opportunity should be given for discussing such Amendments as he and his friends might put down. Having regard to the history of the Bill, that was only reasonable. Perhaps the noble Marquess would inform the House the day on which it was proposed to take the next stage.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: The Bill could be put down for Report to-morrow and for Third Reading on Monday, when Amendments could be discussed. The point is a small one and hardly worth disputing about. But it is not reasonable to ask that the Bill should be sent to the Standing Committee.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: If the noble Marquess the Leader of the House will tell us that in his opinion the immediate passage of this Bill is so urgent that the trifling delay for which my noble friend asks would create serious inconvenience, then I would advise my noble friend to accept the proposal of the noble Marquess and bring forward his Amendments, if he has any, at a future stage.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I am informed that that is the case.

LORD ORANMORE and BROWNE said that, in the circumstances, he would withdraw his opposition.

On Question, Standing Committee negatived.

The Report of Amendments to be received to-morrow; and Bill to be printed as amended. [No. 69.]

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY rose to put the following Questions standing in his name on the Paper: viz.: "To ask the Lord President of the Council whether a Return can be furnished showing (1) the regulations or syllabus of religious instruction put forth by each local authority in England and Wales for the use of its council schools; (2) the date when each was settled; (3) the extent to which individual council schools are, or are not free in each area to depart from the regulations or syllabus; (4) the extent, if any, to which individual council schools in the area do depart from such regulations or syllabus, or refrain from giving any religious instruction; (5) where an authority issues no regulations or syllabus, to state whether individual council schools nevertheless give religious instruction, and on what syllabus; and (6) what arrangements the local authority makes for the inspection of the religious instruction in the council schools."

The most rev. Primate said: My Lords, I do not mean to detain your Lordships more than a moment, for the purport of my Questions will, I think, be obvious to any of your Lordships who have read them. At this moment, when discussions are rife upon educational questions both in Parliament and in the country, reference is constantly made to the syllabuses of religious education which are in use in the council schools of the country. Quotations are frequently made from these syllabuses, sometimes for the purpose of laudation, and sometimes for the purpose of criticism or condemnation. I have no kind of controversial object in asking these Questions. All that I desire is that when we speak upon this matter we shall speak upon a subject of which we have in our hands some certain information. I therefore venture to ask that the information which is tabulated on the Paper may be furnished to the House and to the country. What we desire, of course, is to know whether, when a syllabus is quoted, it is really a typical one or an exceptional one; and, further, whether the mere fact of a syllabus standing upon paper is all that really happens in a local area—it is reported that there are instances in which that is the case—or whether the syllabus prescribed is, as a matter of fact, followed in the schools under the control of those who issue the syllabus. For that reason I ask in my last Question what arrangements the local authority makes for the inspection of religious instruction in the council schools. I ask for a Return with regard simply to council schools, but as regards the denominational schools of the country, so far as they are in connection with the Church of England, we have no kind of wish to do other than give all possible information which may be asked for; and should the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council think it desirable that any information should be furnished by any of the authorities of the Church of England with regard to the denominational schools under their control I need hardly say how gladly and freely we will furnish it. Ten years have elapsed since a similar Return was given of religious instruction in the then Board schools of the country, and during that period a great many administrative changes have taken place with regard to educational matters and the Return then made is now for many reasons somewhat out of date. On these grounds I trust that His Majesty's Government will see their way to grant the Return for which I ask.

LORD ASHBOURNE: Before the noble Earl replies I would like to make one observation by way of suggestion to the most rev. Primate. I think the Return will be extremely valuable and useful, and will assist the discussions which will take place on the Education Bill; but it occurs to me that it would be a valuable addition if the Return could contain a list of the council schools where there are no regulations and no syllabus. The object of the Return is to give information in a handy form, and it would be convenient to know what councils have no regulations and no syllabus.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, I can assure the most rev. Primate and the House that we have no desire whatever to place any obstacle at all in the way of his gaining the information he desires. On the contrary, we welcome his desire for further knowledge on the subject, and we most fully accept his statement that these Questions are put without any controversial object whatever. As those of your Lordships who are in the habit of studying the newspapers are aware, there is not at this moment absolute agreement in the country as to the form which religious instruction ought to take in the elementary schools in England and Wales. That, at any rate, is not overstating the case; and it certainly is desirable tha those who hold different opinions on this subject should have the knowledge that they are arguing from the same data, and that their differences of opinion are not complicated by any further dispute as to what the facts of the case absolutely are; consequently we are very glad to help in supplying all the information possible. I have to point out, however, that in one or two respects it would not be easy, under the circumstances, to furnish the Return exactly in the form suggested by the most rev. Primate. Your Lordships will notice that in his Questions the most rev. Primate asks for information as to the extent, if any, to which individual council schools in the area do depart from such regulations or syllabus, or refrain from giving any religious instruction; and where an authority issues no regulations or syllabus, whether individual council schools nevertheless give religious instruction, and on what syllabus. I must point out to the most rev. Primate that if that information were to be obtained it would mean that every local authority, in any case where it had any doubt as to how far its syllabus was being practically used, would have to put the question to each individual school, and the time occupied in that process would, I am afraid, be so long—it would be a matter of some months—that by the time the information was received the purpose for which it was required might have passed by. I propose, therefore, if the most rev. Primate will agree, to modify the Motion, and to put it on the Paper for to-morrow in this form—

"To move for a Return showing in respect of each local education authority in England and Wales under Part III. of the Education Act, 1902—

1. The regulations or syllabus for religious instruction put forth for the use of its council schools, and the date on which they were issued.

2. In the absence of such regulations or syllabus, any Resolution of the authority on the subject, and its date.

3. Whether the authority leaves individual council schools free to depart from the regulations or syllabus."

Your Lordships will observe that that relieves the local authority from the necessity of applying to each separate school, and allows it to use the information which its education committee possesses.

> "4. Any information now in the possession of the local education authority as to the religious instruction, other than that under its own regulations or syllabus, given in individual council schools."

On that I may deal with the point raised by the noble and learned Lord opposite. It will be quite easy, without altering the the form of the Motion, to make it clear, in issuing this Circular to the local authorities, that we wish, if they possess the information, to know in what schools no religious education at all is given; but we cannot go so far as to ask them to obtain the information by inquiry, for the reasons I have already stated to the House.

> "5. What arrangements the local authority makes for the inspection of religious instruction in its council schools."

I now come to the observation which the most rev. Primate was good enough to make at the end of his speech. As your Lordships are aware, there are some 12,000 Church schools in the country, and I certainly think it would be desirable to lay before Parliament at the same time a statement of what may be called the typical religious instruction given in Church schools under the regulations of the different diocesan boards. I propose, therefore, to ask those who are able to supply the information to be so good as to furnish us with their different syllabuses, and when we receive them, as we have every reason to suppose we shall by the courtesy of the bodies concerned, I will lay them on the Table of the House in the form of a White Paper. It would take too long, and not be worth, I think, either the trouble or the cost, to attempt to obtain from every individual Church school a statement of what religious instruction it actually gives; but at the same time I think your Lordships will agree that it would be desirable, in addition to the information asked for by the most rev. Primate, to get some general idea of the course of religious instruction which may be considered to represent the type given in the Church schools of this country. Provided no opposition is offered to a Return in the terms I have read to your Lordships, I propose to place a Motion for that Return on the Paper to-morrow.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: With the indulgence of the House I should like to say that the Answer which the noble Earl has given seems to me perfectly satisfactory. If I understood him rightly, in the more compendious form in which he proposes to give the information asked in Questions 4 and 5, there will be included something which will show the case of schools in which no religious instruction is given, so far as that is within the knowledge of the local authority.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: That is so.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: That perfectly satisfies me. I agree that expedition is of the the highest importance in this matter, and that anything which causes unnecessary delay is to be deprecated. I would only add that when the noble Earl asks the ecclesiastical authorities of the Church of England for information it will be furnished with the utmost promptitude and care.

CRIMINAL APPEAL.

LORD ASHBOURNE: My Lords, I have on the Paper a Motion for a Return which I think will be interesting and useful in the discussion of the Criminal Appeal Bill which has been introduced by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. A great variety of Bills have been introduced dealing with this very important subject, and it would be a convenience if the information that I ask for were made readily available to those of your Lordships who may desire to take part in the discussion. In the Motion standing on the Paper I ask for a Return of all Criminal Appeal Bills introduced within the last fifty years, but it has been intimated to me that this would exclude an important Bill introduced in the year 1844. I would, therefore, with your Lordships' permission, ask for a Return of all Bills introduced since the year 1843.

Moved, for a Return of all Criminal Appeal Bills introduced since the year 1843, showing—

Date of Introduction.	How far it Proceeded.	By whom Introduced.	Whether it gave an Appeal on (*a*) Law; (*b*) Facts; (*c*) Sentence.	Whether it permitted (*a*) a new trial to be ordered; (*b*) an increase of sentence.	What Tribunal was to hear the Appeals.

—(*Lord Ashbourne.*)

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): My Lords, His Majesty's Government have no objection to this Return. Personally, I think it will prove most useful when the Bill in question is discussed in Committee. There is, however, a verbal Amendment which I would suggest to my noble and learned friend. He does not want a Return of all Criminal Appeal Bills, but only of those allowing appeal in criminal cases tried on indictment. I would suggest that the Motion be amended to read—

> "That there be laid before the House a Return of all Bills introduced since 1843, which proposed to allow an appeal in criminal cases tried on indictment, showing—"

LORD ASHBOURNE: I gladly accept the suggested Amendment of the noble and learned Lord and shall be pleased if he will put the Motion in that form.

On Question, Motion, as amended, agreed to.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 3rd May, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE.)

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—

Marriages Provisional Order Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow.

Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill, read the third time, and passed.

Sutton District Water Bill, "for the preservation of the sources of water supply of the Sutton District Water Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Romford and District Tramways Bill, Order [24th April] that the Romford and District Tramways Bill be committed, read, and discharged: Bill withdrawn—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Peterborough Gas Bill; Rochester, Chatham, and Strood Gas Bill; Southampton Gas Bill, reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords], reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

H. R. Baines and Company Bill [Lords], reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords], reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

London and South Western Railway Bill, reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Railway Bills (Group 4) Sir George Doughty reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

South Metropolitan Gas Bill, reported [Parties do not proceed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Private Bills (Group F.), Major Seely reported from the Committee on Group F of Private Bills; That for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Public Petitions Committee, Third Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to Amendments to Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Crigglestone; Derbyshire; Don Pedro; Moresby; Nostell; and, Thornhill Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Sunderland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Arundel; Beachampton; Bedwardine; Bethnal Green; Biddestone cum Slaughterford (two); Bradenstoke cum Clack; Budleigh Salterton; Cheriton; Chippenham; Chipping Campden (two); Claines; Clee and Cleethorpes; Compton cum up Marden (two); Crofton; Dorset; Eton; Felton Common; Finsbury Park; Freemantle; Great Houghton; Great Somerford; Hartley Manditt (two); Hawley (two); Hockliffe; Hornsey (two); Huddersfield (two); Hythe (two); Kensington; Knelston and Llanddewi (two); Lichfield; Llanwrytyd; London; Monkwearmouth; Montgomery (two); Morpeth; Newick; Newington next Folkestone; Norden; Oldwood near Tenbury; Otterton; Preston (two); Ratcliffe; Rumboldswhyke; St. Pancras; Saltwood; Seagry; Seaton; South Bersted; Stanley; Stockport (two); Tarrant Hinton; Tortington; Upham; West Clandon (two); Wood Green (two); Worcester; and Worthen; to lie upon the the Table.

ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Kingston (Glasgow), in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Kingston (Glasgow), in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from St. Pancras, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE AND EXECUTOR BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, against to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Glasgow and, the Royal Burghs of Scotland; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOURERS) (CRIMES).

Returns [presented 2nd May] to be printed. [No. 156.]

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.

Copy presented,—of Eighth Annual Report of the Conjested Districts (Scotland) Board to the Secretary for Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented.—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3571 and 3572 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS IN CERTAIN URBAN AREAS IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Copy presented,—of Statement showing number of Voluntary Schools on 1st. January 1906 in Urban Areas, with a population of 5,000 and over, in England and Wales respectively, and their average attendance for statistical year ended 31st July 1904, with approximate percentages to the total number and average attendance of all the Voluntary Schools in England and Wales for the same period [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREES (IRELAND).

Return presented,—relative thereto [ordered 5th April; *Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh*]; to lie upon the Table.

ASSESSMENT OF REAL ESTATE ON THE BASIS OF ITS MARKET VALUE.

Copy ordered, "of Translation of Prussian State Documents as to the introduction of the Assessment of Real Estate on the basis of its Market Value for local purposes; Circular of Minister of Finance and Minister of Interior of the 2nd day of October 1202, and Model Regulations therein referred to; Memorandum of 1904; and Extracts from statistical tables accompanying it."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Motor Licences.

COLONEL LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the total amount raised during 1905 from licences taken out for motor vehicles of all descriptions, including motor cycles.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The duties paid on motor cycles are not distinguished in the Returns for 1905 from those paid on other two-wheeled vehicles (though they will be in future). But on motor vehicles of all other descriptions the total of the duties collected in 1905 amounted to £61,967.

Postmen's Sick Benefits.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether postmen who belong to sick benefit clubs are treated under any special rules with regard to sick absence, and whether their sick pay is stopped earlier than in the case of men who do not belong to sick benefit societies.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The Answer is in the negative.

Assistant Postmen's Increments.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that in calculating the unestablished service of assistant postmen for special increments due to them under the memorandum of 1st April, 1905, two-thirds of the time is deducted in those offices where the minimum has been raised, although the memorandum states that such service shall count under the same conditions as it does for stripes, and expressly provides that the pay shall not be carried more than two increments beyond the new scale.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) As the minimum was raised by 1s. (which is the equivalent of eight months at 1s. 6d. a year) on 1st April, 1905, it was decided, under the Stanley revision, to deduct eight months from the unestablished service rendered before 1st April, 1905, in the case of officers appointed on the new scale. If this had not been done, a postman appointed on the 31st March 1905, would have been in receipt of less wages than a postman with similar unestablished service appointed on the 1st April, 1905.

Small Holdings in County Roscommon.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether representations have been made to the Estates Commissioners, on behalf of the small occupiers of land in the parish of Kiltoom, county Roscommon, as to the general desire of the people that the lands of Carrounolan, in the barony of Athlone, should be acquired for the purpose of enlarging the small holdings; and, in view of the fact that a certain portion of the proprietors' interests in these lands is now for sale, and that this is the only untenanted land in the parish which, with this exception, has only small and, in many cases, uneconomic holdings, will he advise the Estates Commissioners to use their powers of initiating negotiations with all those interested in the ownership of this land for the purpose of making it available for distribution.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that the fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. The estate referred to is that of Williams and others, and the Commissioners have ascertained that three undivided sevenths of this estate are for sale in the Land Judge's Court. The Commissioners are not satisfied that it will be possible for them to purchase undivided shares of the estate for division amongst small tenants in the vicinity, but they are making further inquiries in the matter, and, if it should be found practicable they will issue a request to the Land Judge under Section 7 of the Act of 1903, with a view to considering the question of purchase.

Dunshaughlin Labourers' Cottage Site Dispute.

Mr. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Dunshaughlin District Council purchased an acre of land from a Mr. Kelly for the purpose of building a labourer's cottage on it; that since the cottage was built Mr. Kelly objected to the measurement, and claims to have a rood of the plot restored to him; that the council's surveyor has again measured the plot, and states that the same does not contain one foot more than the statute acre; and whether he proposes to take any steps to prevent the council giving back to Mr. Kelly any part of the land which they purchased from him with public money.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The rural district council purchased an acre of land in Mr. Kelly's occupation for a labourer's cottage. While the cottage was in course of erection, Mr. Kelly took exception to the manner in which the boundaries were being marked out, and claimed a readjustment of the plot. The claim was considered and recommended by a committee of the district council, and by its officers, and is now under the consideration of the Local Government Board, who have not yet arrived at a decision in the matter.

Imprisonment for Contempt of Court—Case of Declan Power.

Mr. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Declan Power, an evicted tenant on the Odell estate, county Waterford, was recently imprisoned for contempt of court by the Land Judge on two occasions, the first for one year and four months, and the second for nine months; whether on the second occasion his wife was also arrested by order of the Land Judge and imprisoned for three months and twelve days for contempt of court; whether, seeing that the alleged contempt of court consisted in retaking possession of his evicted holding, he will say whether that offence is punishable by the ordinary law; and whether legislation will be introduced to prevent the jurisdiction in contempt of court cases from being applied to offences for which the ordinary law provides a definite penalty.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The facts are substantially as stated in the first two parts of this Question, save that the imprisonment did not take place recently, but in the years 1897 and 1900 respectively. The offence of taking forcible possession is punishable by the ordinary law. As regards the concluding part of the Question, I beg to refer to the reply which I gave to the similar Question of the hon. Member for North Sligo on 20th March,† and to what was said by my right hon. friend the Attorney-General in the debate on this subject a few weeks ago.‡ The subject will not be lost sight of.

Examination in Irish in North Galway Schools.

MR. HAZLETON (Galway, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what provision at present exists for the examination of Irish in the schools in North Galway; how many inspectors are there for the division competent to examine the bi-lingual schools; how many examiners are there competent to examine in Irish as an ordinary subject; whether there is only one such for each province; and, if so, will he represent to the National Board that the provision in this respect is entirely inadequate.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that North Galway is included in a district which is assigned to two inspectors of Irish, who examine the schools in which the bi-lingual programme has been sanctioned. There is one special inspector of Irish, and sixteen other inspectors who are competent to examine in the subject. These inspectors are not assigned by provinces, but their services are availed of when and where necessary. If this provision is shown to be inadequate, I have no doubt the National Board will endeavour to secure a better provision.

Dromin Evicted Tenant—Daniel Murphy.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any steps have been taken to reinstate Mr. Daniel Murphy in his farm at Dromin, Killorglin, Kerry; whether the Estates Commissioners have had any communication with the occupier, Mr. Thomas Wharton, with regard to his giving up the place to the owner; and whether steps will be immediately taken to transfer the occupier from this farm to some other district.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that an application for reinstatement in his former holding has been lodged by Mr. Daniel Murphy, who states that the holding in question has been in the occupation of Mr. Roger Wharton since 1898. The owner has not up to the present instituted any proceedings for the sale of the estate, and the Commissioners have not yet had an opportunity of making any inquiries into the matter.

Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what is the present strength of the Royal Irish Constabulary; what number of recruits were enrolled in the years 1904 and 1905; whether recruiting is at present going on; and at what rate per month for 1906

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) On the 31st March, 1906, the latest date at which Returns have been compiled, the total number of sergeants and constables in the Royal Irish Constabulary was 9,481. The numbers of recruits enrolled in 1904 and 1905 were fifty-two and 197 respectively. Recruiting is at present provisionally proceeding at the rate of about forty each month, which is no more than equivalent to the waste of the force.

Special Police Service in Ireland.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of cases in which police are now stationed in special localities for alleged special and exceptional duties in Ireland; on whose requisition and order are they so located; and on whose recommendation are they retained in these alleged troubled districts.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 226–7.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, clv., 605 *et seq.*

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Seven men of the reserve force are stationed in county Cork, and forty-eight men from other counties are serving in county Galway. These extra police were originally sent to, and are now retained in, the counties in question at the instance of the Inspector-General and with the approval of the Government. No charge in respect of extra police is made upon local authorities in county Galway, seeing that the total force employed in that county does not exceed the established strength of the county force. The number of extra police employed in Ireland is now considerably smaller than it has been for some years.

Report of the Estates Commissioners.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the Report of the Estates Commissioners will be circulated.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners hope to have their Report for the year ending March 31st last ready by the middle of June.

Irish Agricultural Organisation Society.

MR. DILLON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction makes any grant of money, directly or indirectly, to the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Department of Agriculture has made payments to the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society up to March last for work done by the Society at the request of the Department in connection with certain forms of agricultural organisation, such as agricultural banks and home industries' societies, in respect of which no danger of controversy arose, and of which the Council of Agriculture had expressed their approval. It has this year been resolved to include provisionally other forms of organisation than those abovementioned for mutual advantage among members of the agricultural classes, and the Council of Agriculture are to be invited at their next meeting to express their opinion on the question of aiding such methods or forms.

Boyle Councillor's Election Petition.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a demand has been made by the Treasury on the Rural District Council of Boyle for the sum of £81, the official expenses incurred in connection with a recent petition against the election of a district councillor for the Boyle urban division; whether it is in the absolute discretion of the Commissioner to grant these costs against the body of the ratepayers who were not guilty of any breach of the law; whether any, and, if so, what facilities are afforded the ratepayers of checking the account; and whether the Government will consider the wishes of the district council that this amount should not be levied on the district.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Chief Secretary has asked me to answer this Question. It is the fact that a demand has been made upon the Boyle Rural District Council as stated. Under Section 101 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, these moneys are repayable out of the local rate unless the Court by which the petition was tried ordered that they should be repaid by the petitioner or the respondent. Such an order is within the absolute discretion of the Court. Under the statute above quoted the moneys are paid in the first instance by the Treasury, which is responsible for their correctness upon the facts stated by the Court. It is not usual to submit the detailed accounts to the ratepayers, but the amount paid to each officer engaged in the trial of the petition is specified in the Treasury certificate by which repayment is claimed. As the provisions of the statute as to repayment are imperative, the Government has no power to give effect to the wishes of the district council in the matter.

Cork Harbour Board and Public Monuments.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Cork Harbour Board have granted the sum of £35, out of the public moneys which they administer, towards paying off the debt on a monument recently erected in a public street in Cork in memory of certain Irishmen who fought to recover the independence of Ireland, and to encourage the youth of Ireland to imitate their example; and whether he intends to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) It would appear from Reports which have been published in the newspapers that the facts are as stated. The Cork Harbour Board is not under the control of the Irish Government, and its accounts are not audited by the Local Government Board, who have, therefore, no power to question the legality of the expenditure referred to.

Sparkbrook Factory Agreement.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the nature of the arrangements in regard to the manufacture of the new rifle embodied in the agreement for the sale of the Sparkbrook factory, and the price to be paid for each finished rifle.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.* As the agreement for the sale of the Sparkbrook factory has not yet been completed I am not in a position to give my hon. friend the detailed information for which he asks.

Enfield Factory.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that a large plant of special machinery and tools is available at Enfield Factory for the manufacture of rifles, will he state why 33 per cent. more rifles are to be manufactured by private firms than at the factory at Enfield.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The usual allotment of orders to the trade has been supplemented by those given to Sparkbrook, while those given to the ordnance factories are proportionately diminished.

Curramore Bog.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the date upon which an arbitration inquiry in reference to the compulsory acquisition by the military authorities of the bog of Curramore, near Athlone, in the county of Roscommon, took place, and the date of award therein; whether a number of the persons to whom various sums were awarded have not yet been paid and whether he will state the cause of the delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The arbitration took place from the 27th July to the 11th August 1903. The date of the awards was the 23rd December 1903. All persons to whom compensation was awarded have been paid.

Manchurian War—General Ian Hamilton's Report.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether General Ian Hamilton's Reports on the War in Manchuria, supplemented by those of Colonel Haldane and the staff, can be purchased by volunteer officers or others desiring to study them for purposes of military instruction, or whether they are regarded by the War Office as of a confidential nature.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The books referred to are regarded as strictly confidential, and in view of this as wide a distribution has been made as was held to be practicable. A history of this war compiled from the non-confidential portions of the Reports is in the course of preparation and will be available for all officers.

Inoculation against Enteric Fever.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has yet received the Report of the Committee appointed to consider the question as to the value of inoculation against enteric fever; and, if so, will he lay it upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The final Report of the Antityphoid Inoculation Committee has not yet been received. An interim Report has, however, been received, and the recommendation contained therein that the practice of voluntary inoculation against enteric fever should be resumed, has been approved by the Army Council. The voluntary inoculation of men proceeding abroad is now being carried out, and arrangements are being made for those now serving in India. I will lay this Report upon the Table.

Compulsory School Attendance Abroad.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the President of the Board of Education, at what age compulsory attendance at public elementary schools begins in the following countries, colonies, and states: France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, Japan, Canada, the State of New York, and the State of Massachusetts.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I will lay upon the Table of the House, I hope on Monday, a statement showing the practice in the countries named.

Denominational Instruction in Voluntary Schools.

MR. CLOUGH (Yorkshire, W.R., Skipton): To ask the President of the Board Education whether he can state the time per week that was actually occupied in imparting distinctively denominational instruction by the teachers or clerics, or both, in the so-called voluntary schools during 1901; and whether he can state in how many of these schools the time so occupied did not exceed half an hour, one hour, and one and a half hours, and in how many it exceeded one and a half hours per week.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Board have no information on the subject.

Trust Deeds of Voluntary Schools.

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): to ask the President of the Board of Education, when the Return of Trust Deeds of Voluntary Schools, moved for at the beginning of the Session, may be expected to be in the hands of Members; and whether he will give an assurance that the House shall not be asked to go into Committee on the Education Bill before that Return is presented.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*): It is not possible to give a date for the completion of the Return. The work of examining the trust deeds is both heavier and more complicated than was expected. Many schools have more than one trust deed (in some cases more than 20 deeds) and different parts of the same school and even of the same room, are subject to different trusts or are held on different tenures. In many cases it has been necessary to ask the trustees for further information, and in nearly 2,000 cases the trustees have up to now failed to comply with the Board's request for the transmission of their deeds. As it is obviously desirable that a complete and accurate Return should eventually be made it is impossible to give the assurance which the right hon. Member asks for, but I am quite willing if it is desired to proceed with the publication of the Return by instalments so that the House may be in possession of as much information as possible for the Committee stage.

Durham Mines—Storage of Explosives.

MR. JOHN JOHNSON (Gateshead): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to a notice issued by the police to the miners of Durham, altering the conditions upon which police certificates for the keeping of blasting explosives, other than gunpowder, will be issued to workmen, and particularly to the requirements as to the provision of storage by the workmen; and whether in view of the difficulties that this order will impose on the workmen, he will consider the possibility of taking any action, by the issue of regulations or otherwise, in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone*): I have seen the notice to which the hon. Member refers. The question of the keeping of explosives by miners has for some time engaged the consideration of the Department, in consequence of the numerous accidents caused. more especially by the practice of men taking explosives to their homes, and I recently issued to police forces throughout the country a circular impressing on them the necessity of enforcing strictly the requirements under the Explosives Act, and more especially of granting certificates for the keeping of blasting explosives only to such men as could satisfy the police that they had a place of storage entirely under their control and inaccessible to other persons, and that otherwise they were fit persons to take charge of explosives. In places, however, where these requirements had not been fully enforced, the police were recommended to give due warning, so as to prevent any hardship or dislocation of the industry. I may add that I am proposing to bring the whole question of the use and keeping of explosives for blasting purposes in mines and quarries under the consideration of the Royal Commission of Mines which is shortly to be appointed.

Telephone Service and the Fruit Industry.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent Thanet): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can take measures to give effect to the recommendation of the Departmental Committee of the Board of Agriculture on the Fruit Industry, that the telephone service should be further extended in country distrcts.

(*Answered by Mr Sydney Buxton.*): I have been in communication with the Board of Agriculture as to the best means of extending the telephone system in the fruit-growing districts of the country; and the circumstances of particular districts, to which the Board has drawn my attention, are being investigated. During the last two years the Post Office has opened 127 exchanges in country districts, and a considerable number of others are being constructed. I hope that the arrangement lately announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, under which the Post Office will assume two-thirds of the liability under guarantees for the extension of the telephone trunk wire system, will facilitate such extensions.

Kiveton Park Colliery Post Office.

MR. CHARLES NICHOLSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Doncaster): To ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to the application made by the parish council of Wales, Kiveton Park, near Sheffield, to have the Kiveton Park Colliery post office made a postal telegraph office as well; whether he is aware that the parish council of Wales have offered to guarantee the authorities against loss under the provisions of The Post Office Amendment Act, 1895; and what steps he proposes to take, if any, to meet the request of the Wales parish council.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton*): I have inquired into the matter. The Wales Parish Council have offered the usual guarantee for the extension of telegraph business to the post office at Kiveton Park Colliery. I find, however, that the nearest telegraph office is only about three-quarters of a mile distant, that the transaction of telegraph business there is at present unremunerative, and that the number of telegrams which would probably be sent from the proposed new office is less than three a week. Under these circumstances I regret that I should not be justified in complying with the request of the parish council.

Bix Postmistress' Pay.

MR. MORRELL (Oxfordshire, Henley): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that in the parish of Bix, near Henley-on-Thames, the total sum paid for hire of post office, with light, firing, etc., and the services of the postmistress is £10 15s. a year, or rather more than 6d. a day, and that for this remuneration the postmistress has to be on duty from 6.30 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays and 6.50 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. to 11.50 a.m. on Sundays, making a week of 84½ hours; and whether he will take steps to increase the remuneration.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton*): The emolument of the sub-postmistress of Bix appear to be as stated by the hon. Member. The sub-postmistress, like most sub-postmasters and sub-postmistresses in charge of commission sub-offices, has a private business. The amounts such sub-postmasters receive from the Post Office, in the form of commission on the comparatively few simple duties they perform for the Department are merely adjuncts to the income derived from their ordinary business. The period during which the sub-postmistress of Bix provides for attendance for Post Office work of necessity covers a good many hours per diem, but it is not to be assumed that the work occupies any very large portion of this time. The Select Committee will consider the question of the emoluments of the sub-postmasters.

Locomotive Spark Arresters.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham W.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been drawn to an invention described as a spark arrester for locomotives, concerning which a Paper was read before the council of the Midland Counties Institution of Engineers at Nottingham in September last; and whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the value of this invention as a means of preventing damage by fire to hedges and fields adjacent to railways.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George*): My hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. The attention of the Board of Trade has been called to the invention referred to, and the Paper respecting it has been seen by the technical officers of the Board. The adoption of any particular appliance of this character is, however, a matter for the consideration of the several railway companies.

Inspection of Railway Offices.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether local sanitary or factory inspectors have powers of inspection in the case of railway offices or other buildings on railway property.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I presume my hon. friend has in view cases of the kind to which he referred in his Question of the 28th March. If, then, he refers to buildings used as workplaces for clerks or others in similar employment and alleged to be so overcrowded while work is carried on as to be dangerous or injurious to the health of those employed, the circumstances might be such as to enable the local authority to use the powers of entry and inspection conferred by the Public Health Acts. Any question as to the powers of the factory inspectors would be a matter for the Home Secretary.

Poor Law Settlements.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire Kingswinford): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the present position as to settlements of poor persons in parishes divided under the operation of Section 1 (3) 36 (1) or 36 (2) of The Local Government Act, 1894; and whether he will propose some remedy to meet the cases in which persons have lost their settlement by reason of the division of the parish in which they were born or have derived a settlement, and will he consult the law officers of the Crown.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The hon. Member asked me an almost precisely similar Question on the 9th April,† and I would refer him to the Answer I then gave. I have further considered the matter, but it does not seem to me to be necessary to consult the law officers on the subject.

Assistant Clerks' Superannuation.

MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if, seeing that senior assistant clerks are only allowed to count one-half of their unestablished service towards superanuation, and as the present plan of stating in the estimates the service ranking for pension only is misleading, he will in future, until such time as this class are allowed to count their full service, introduce into the estimates a column showing the years of unestablished as well as the established service of clerks awarded pensions.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The suggestion put forward by the hon. Member has been carefully considered, but the conclusion has been come to that it would not be expedient to insert in the estimates any particulars of service other than those upon which the award of pension is based.

Salmon Fishery Legislation.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): To ask the Secretary for

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 995–6.

Scotland whether he can give any indication of his intentions with respect to salmon fishery legislation.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I regret that at present it is not possible for me to undertake to introduce legislation upon this subject this session.

Custom's Duties on Sweetstuffs.

Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what have been the gross and net receipts during the financial year 1905–6 from the duties on sugar, glucose, molasses, saccharine, and articles containing sugar or sweetening matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The gross and net receipts of Customs and Excise duties on sugar, molasses, glucose, saccharine, and articles containing sugar, during the financial year 1905–6, were—

	Gross.	Net.
I.—Customs.	£	£
Sugar, raw and refined, British and Foreign	5,859,778	5,723,458
Glucose	163,630	160,882
Molasses, British and Foreign	140,211	139,641
Saccharine	40,080	39,596
Articles containing sugar	115,201	114,375
	6,318,900	6,177,952
II.—Excise.		
Glucose	91,460	89,496
Saccharine	13,144	13,144
	104,604	102,640
Total	6,423,504	6,280,592

Irish Land Commission Staff.

Mr. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a gentleman named Wilkinson has recently been appointed to a position in the Irish Land Commission at a salary of £300 per annum, and that the duties performed by this gentleman were previously discharged by a boy clerk at 16s. per week; and will he state the reason for this appointment, and say what are the qualifications and previous occupations of Mr. Wilkinson.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Mr. W. F. Wilkinson was, on December 15th, 1905, appointed assistant to the clerk in charge of the department for the collection of interest in lieu of rent, at the salary stated in the Question. He is a skilled accountant who served his apprenticeship under a firm of public accountants, and had many years experience as managing clerk to a firm of land agents, with a large clerical staff under his control. The staff of the department in question consists of forty clerks, who are under the control of the clerk in charge and his assistant. It is not the fact that the duties of such assistant were previously discharged by a boy clerk. The department in question is one of considerable importance; the number of payers of interest is now about 80,000 and is daily increasing, and a large clerical staff, under adequate supervision, is required for the duties of the department.

Meetings of the Irish Congested Districts Board.

Dr. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of meetings which have been held by the Congested Districts Board within the last two years, and who attended those meetings.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) During the two years from May, 1904, to April, 1906, thirty meetings of the Congested Districts Board were held. The following statement gives the number of attendances of the different members at these meetings:—Mr. Wyndham, 2; Mr. Long, 5; Mr. Bryce, 1; Sir Antony MacDonnell, 23; Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, 17; Lord Shaftesbury, 13; Sir Horace Plunkett, 21; Mr. Kennedy, 25; Mr. Geoghegan 23; Mr. Green, 25; Rev. Dr. O'Hara, 20. Attendances at committee meetings, which usually occupy two days before each sitting of the Board, are not included in this statement.

Congested Districts Board and Inspection of Estates.

Dr. AMBROSE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any members of the Congested Districts Board ever inspected estates which were about to be or which have been purchased by the Board; if so, what are the names of the estates and what members of the Board inspected them; have any members of the Board ever interviewed the intending occupiers of new holdings under the Board, with a view to their fitness for such holdings; if so, who are the members; have any members of the Board ever visited the residents of uneconomic holdings, for whose benefit the Congested Districts Act was passed; and, if so, what are the names of those members, and what localities have been visited by them.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Members of the Congested Districts Board have frequently inspected estates purchased by them, but no records of such visits have been kept. It is not the practice of the Board to visit estates before purchasing them; when considering such purchases they have before them full reports and valuations prepared by the chief land inspector, who is assisted by other expert valuers in the Board's service. The Board have now under consideration the means whereby their valuations may harmonise with the valuations of the Estates Commissioners. It is not the practice of the Board to interview intending occupiers of new holdings, but when visiting estates which have been purchased the Board have at times visited occupiers of uneconomic buildings. No records of such visits have been kept.

Duties of Attendants at the National Library of Ireland.

Mr. HAZLETON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether some of the attendants in the National Library of Ireland are called upon to do clerical and other work, outside their ordinary duties, without extra remuneration; and, if so, whether steps will be taken to see that they are paid for such work, as is the case, under similar circumstances, in the British Museum.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that no attendant in the National Library of Ireland is called upon to do any work beyond his ordinary duties as an attendant or outside the established hours.

Yeomanry Canteens.

Mr. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he is aware that an order has been issued forbidding the sale of spirituous liquors in the canteens of Imperial Yeomanry Regiments when out for annual training;

whether unfavourable reports have been received upon the management of such canteens in previous years; and, if not, whether he will cause the order to be cancelled.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The Imperial Yeomanry, when out for training, are under military law, and, as regards their canteens, are subject to the same rules as govern the canteens of the regular Army and Militia. Under these rules the sale of spirituous liquors of any description is prohibited at home. No unfavourable reports upon the management of Yeomanry canteens have been received in previous years.

St. Helena Garrison.

MR. W. F. D. SMITH: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can say upon what date the garrison of St. Helena will be withdrawn.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The garrison of St. Helena will be withdrawn in the autumn.

Ecclesiastical Disorders Commission—Publication of Report.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state when the Report of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Disorders will be published.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I must refer my hon. friend to the Answer I gave yesterday to a similar Question.†

Description of Foreign made Jam.

MR. H. H. MARKS: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to give effect to the recommendation of the Departmental Committee of the Board of Agriculture on the Fruit Industry, that jam made wholly or in part from foreign fruit should have this fact clearly stated on the label of every pot or jar in which it is sold.

Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.) No effect could be given to this recommendation without legislation amending the Merchandise Marks Act, and such legislation could not be confined to a single article such as jam. I am not prepayed to introduce a measure of this kind.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Repatriation of Chinese Coolies—Government Proclamation.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is now able to state the steps that have been or will be taken with a view to carry out the pledges of the Government in regard to the repatriation of the Chinese coolies in South Africa.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The Secretary of State has approved the issue of a notice this week, in the following terms:—"Notification addressed to Chinese Indentured Labourers on the Witwatersrand Gold Mines. Although when you enlisted in China for the Transvaal you were informed that you were engaging yourselves to work on gold mines and you entered into a contract to that effect, it has come to my ears that certain amongst you, not appreciating the conditions under which mining is carried on in this country, are discontented in spirit. There may also be others who, unaccustomed to strenuous manual labour, find themselves on arrival in a position of difficulty. Cases such as these give rise to feelings of compassion. Now you all know that in terms of Clause 14 of your contract any labourer may at any time terminate the contract without assigning any reason on tendering to his employer the expenses incurred in introducing him into the Transvaal, together with a sum sufficient to defray the expenditure necessary in returning him. This is a provision of which you can all avail yourselves, and it cannot be said that you are detained here against your will. Perhaps, however, some of you who are anxious to return may not have earned the wherewithal to enable you to do so. If this be the case, I am willing to receive any statements you who really wish to leave the Transvaal may have to make, and after a review of circumstances to consider whether or not I would be prepared to recommend Government to be generous to you and not to insist on the full payment required from you by your contract. An exceptional act of benevolence of this kind ought to command your gratitude. In sending in your petitions, however, you must clearly inform me of the motives which influenced you in the first instance to enlist and now influence you in wishing to return to China, of the amount of monthly wages you earn, of the class of work on which you are engaged, and of the money you have saved. If circumstances appear to me to warrant it, I will take note of and register the application, but the applicant will thereafter have to make an honest effort by working on his mine to earn a contribution towards his expenses. Of such honest effort I will constitute myself the judge, and should any fail in this respect his application will be cancelled. On receipt of the applications from the various mines I will carefully weigh each individual case and decide which of them are deserving of the generous consideration of the Government and entitled to this favoured treatment. It must be understood that no one who has not served in the Transvaal for at least six months need apply; for you all know that beginnings are not easy, and any one undertaking work partaking of a novel character cannot be in a position to judge whether or not he is fit for it uutil he has given it a fair trial. The obvious duty of all who desire to return to China is to save money and avail themselves of the provisions of the 14th Clause in their contract of service. Still, force of circumstances may be against some of you, and I am willing to consider genuine applications with a view to rendering assistance. I solemnly warn you that any attempt to deceive me by misrepresentations which are punishable by the law of the Transvaal will be dealt with accordingly. And it must further be distinctly borne in mind by all who make application as a result of this notice that, if allowed to return to China, they will never, under any circumstances, be allowed to re-enter the Transvaal, and that steps will be taken severely to punish anyone who attempts to do so." I ought to add, of course this notice will be published in Chinese.

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† See col. 578.

Mr. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): By whom will the notice be signed?

Mr. CHURCHILL: It will be signed by the Superintendent of Foreign Labour.

Mr. DALZIEL: Am I to understand that each individual Chinaman will have personally to convince the Superintendent of Foreign Labour on the point before he is allowed to go, or will the manager of the mines have anything to say in the matter?

Mr. CHURCHILL: I should not imagine that the manager of the mine will come into the question at all. If a coolie makes his application and is able to convince the Superintendent of Foreign Labour that he has a *bonâ fide* desire to return to China, he will be allowed to return whether it is the wish of the mine manager that he should return or not. And we have Lord Selborne's personal guarantee that the machinery of the offer which is now made will be carried out in a genuine and honest spirit, and with every desire to give full effect to the intentions of His Majesty's Government that no man who earnestly and honestly desires to return to China shall be kept under those conditions against his will.

Major SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): May I ask what length of time it is contemplated by His Majesty's Government that a Chinaman should continue to work in order to show, in accordance with the terms of the notice read out, that he is anxious to return to China?

Mr. CHURCHILL: The length of time is not definitely stated in the proclamation, but it is quite clear that no period of probation which will have the effect of taking away with one hand what is offered with the other will be consented to by His Majesty's Government.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): When will the proclamation come into force?

Mr. CHURCHILL: It will be posted before the end of this week, or in the early days of next week.

Captain CRAIG (Down, E.): I desire to ask whether, if a Chinaman represents to the Superintendent of Foreign Labour that the conditions under which he has been invited out to South Africa to work in the mines constitute a condition of slavery, that will be sufficient to enable him to go back to China?

MR. CHURCHILL: I think the Question of the hon. Gentleman is fully covered by the terms of the proclamation. I believe the notice is to be posted in a conspicuous position, so that the Chinese will have no difficulty in having access to it at all the mines on the Witwatersrand reef.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): Has this proclamation yet been transmitted to South Africa?

MR. CHURCHILL: The terms of the proclamation have been most carefully arranged by Lord Selborne, and have received the sanction of the Secretary of State here. Until the Secretary of State sanctioned them I was not able to lay the terms of the proclamation before the House. The Secretary of State has now sanctioned them, and the policy that will follow from the proclamation will be carried into operative effect.

DR. MACNAMARA: Is it possible to cast the proclamation in language simpler and more to the point?

MR. CHURCHILL: I do not pretend to be a judge of the simplicity of language, but, if I may venture on a lay opinion, I would say that I do not see in what terms it would be possible more accurately to convey the offer which His Majesty's Government intend to convey to the coolie than in the terms which Lord Selborne has chosen. I have every reason to believe that the terms, addressed as they are to Chinese coolies, who entertain perhaps a somewhat different opinion of the influence and character of the Government from what we in this country are accustomed to do, will have the effect which His Majesty's Government contemplate, and which they desire.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): Am I to understand that the only ground on which a coolie may be sent back at the expense of the State is that the Superintendent of Foreign Labour is to be satisfied that he is unfit for the work?

MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir, but that he has a genuine and earnest desire to return to China.

Other hon. Members rose to ask further Questions.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Nearly a quarter of an hour has already been taken up by this Question, and it is not fair to other hon. Gentlemen who have Questions on the Paper to continue these supplementary Questions.

Johannesburg Chamber of Mines.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government has received a communication from the Chamber of Mines of Johannesburg, through the Lieutenant-Governor, concerning the new regulation requiring notices to be posted in the mines informing the coolies that they may be repatriated during their term of contract; if so, what was the exact nature of the communication; and what reply did the Government make.

MR. CHURCHILL: A memorandum from the Chamber of Mines on the subject has been transmitted to the Secretary of State, but has not yet arrived though the important parts have been telegraphed. No answer has as yet been sent, and I am not able to state the nature of the communication at present. I may add that it is not clear to the Secretary of State, as yet, whether the communication is of a confidential character.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: May I ask if the Secretary of State will not take into consideration the question of delaying the Proclamation just read until the communication has been received?

MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir. The Proclamation has been delayed long enough.

Disturbances in Brunei.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any information to communicate to the House, from the British Resident in Brunei, concerning the disturbances which have recently occurred within the Sultan of Brunei's territory; will he state what the area and the present population of this sultanate is; and whether, seeing that Brunei is enveloped and enclosed on the landward side by the territory of H.H. the Rajah of Sarawak, would he state the number of the Malay natives who, during the last ten years, have fled from Brunei to settle in Sarawak; and whether and how often the flag of Sarawak has been hoisted by the natives in Brunei.

MR. CHURCHILL: No official information has been received as to any disturbances in Brunei, but the Resident will be asked for a report; no statistics are in existence, but the area of the sultanate is estimated at 4,000 square miles, and the population at about 30,000; it would be impossible to give accurate details as to the number of natives who have migrated from Brunei to Sarawak territory, but the Resident will be asked if he has any information; I am not aware that the Sarawak flag has ever been hoisted in Brunei except by individuals who for personal reasons claimed the protection of that State.

Government Arms Factories in India.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, having regard to the fact that the Government of India have facilities for the manufacture of small arms in Government factories, will arrangements be made for the new short rifles required for Indian troops to be made in India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): The Government factories in India will make a proportion of the new short rifles required for the Army in India. The capacity of the factories is not sufficient to make the whole number required within a reasonable period.

Papers on Tibet.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he can now lay upon the Table further Papers with reference to the agreement with Tibet.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Papers will be laid as soon as the ratifications of the convention for the adhesion of China to the Tibet Convention have been exchanged, but the Answer given yesterday† has already explained the nature of the Convention with China.

Indian Provincial Settlements.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether Madras and the United Provinces are to continue, in respect of their provincial contracts with the Government of India, to receive a quarter share of their growing revenues, plus an additional assignment, as compared with the half share of growing revenues enjoyed by other provinces under the like contracts.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: The provincial settlements are made after full discussion in each case between the Government of India and the Provincial Government; and so far as I am aware it is not at present intended that the settlements which were made in 1904 with Madras and the United Provinces shall be modified.

Indian Trade Journal.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Indian Trade Journal, lately established by the Commercial Department of the Government of India, is intended to be of a permanent character.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I understand that the journal is intended to be a permanent feature of the system of commercial intelligence which the Government of India have lately organised, though as to form and contents it may be regarded as being in the experimental stage.

The Congo Free State.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government have information to the effect that King Leopold has declined to sign the decrees submitted by the Commission of Reforms appointed by the sovereign of the Congo State in consequence of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry, or has in lieu of signature, transmitted the decree to Governor Wahis for advice; whether, having regard to the correspondence between His Majesty's Government and the Government of the Congo State at the time when the Commission of Inquiry was appointed, and to the fact that the Congo Report substantiates the statements made by the then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which formed the subject of the British Note of August 8th, 1903, and in view of the delay that has occurred, His Majesty's Government contemplate any further immediate action; and whether the policy of entering into communication with the Government of Belgium upon the subject of the future of the Congo has been considered, there being a Government Bill before the Belgian Parliament to the general policy of which His Majesty's Government have stated in the House of Commons that they are favourable.

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† See Col. 553.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman rises I should like to ask him the following Question, of which I have given him private notice:—Whether His Majesty's Government has any official knowledge that King Leopold has refused to sign the recommendations of the Commission on Reforms in the Congo Free State; whether he considers there is anything unreasonable in the desire of King Leopald to consult the responsible Governor of the Congo Free State before finally authorising the reforms recommended by the Commission; whether he considers His Majesty's Government have any greater right to interfere in the affairs of the Congo Free State than it had to prevent the shooting in cold blood in Natal of two batches of unarmed prisoners, subjects of His Majesty, by His Majesty's troops, without trial by law.

*MR. SPEAKER: That last Question is not a proper one. It is not one of fact, but of opinion.

MR. NOLAN: I wish further to ask whether there is any evidence before the House that the reports of atrocities circulated amongst Members of this House by the Congo Reform Association are other than gross exaggerations or baseless calumnies, as stated on the authority of independent witnesses of the highest character? And whether he does not think His Majesty's Government has enough trouble on hand on the African continent, in connection with Egypt, Natal, and Nigeria, without going in search of further trouble in the territories of independent foreign states.

*MR. SPEAKER: That again is a matter of opinion.

MR. MCKEAN (Monaghan, S.): Before answering the Question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean will the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs say whether it is the fact that the decrees of the Commission of Reforms referred to in the Question have only been submitted a month ago; whether therefore it is reasonable to expect that reforms of the most far-reaching character can be approved and determined on without due examination and inquiry as to their necessity and advisability; also whether it is not the fact that the Congo Free State is a Sovereign State; whether therefore, in accordance with International Law, the intervention on the part of His Majesty's Government suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean is not absolutely barred; and whether this view is not supported by the opinion of Mr. Root, Secretary of State for the United States of America, expressed in his letter bearing date February 28th, 1906, addressed to Mr. Denby, Member of Congress; and whether under all these circumstances the right hon. Baronet will decline to advise His Majesty's Government to take any further action in the matter?

*MR. SPEAKER: Notice should be given of this Question.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): Both supplementary Questions contain so much matter that it is desirable I should have due notice before attempting to answer them. I may say I have not received the notice sent me by the hon. Member for South Louth. In reply to the Question of the right hon. Baronet I have to say that our own opinion as to the great desirability of not delaying the Reforms has already been made known to the Congo Government. We cannot enter into communication with the Belgian Government until they are willing to be concerned; but as a matter of fact if they accepted responsibility for the Congo State, it would be a guarantee of reform and good government which would be very welcome.

Capitulations of Egypt—Lord Cromer's. Proposals.

MR. GOOCH (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government approve Lord Cromer's proposals for the modification of the capitulations in Egypt; and, if so, when they intend to bring them before the notice of the Powers concerned.

SIR EDWARD GREY: It will be seen, on reference to Lord Cromer's Report (page 3), that his remarks respecting the modification of the capitulations are made in order to elicit an expression of local opinion which will be fully and impartially considered before any final and more detailed proposals are laid before His Majesty's Government. Any expression of opinion on the part of His Majesty's Government at this stage would, therefore, be premature; what they desire is that the question to which Lord Cromer has called attention should receive attentive and impartial consideration, with a view to securing eventually reforms, which will be both effective and acceptable.

Income-Tax.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in the Committee which he proposes to appoint to consider the question of the graduation and differentiation of the Income-tax, he will be prepared to refer to that Committee the question as to whether a general tax on capital (to be graduated) might be substituted instead of the Income-tax, as is the case in the United States of America and many of our own colonies.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): The reference to the Committee will be to consider the practicability of graduating the amount of the tax and of differentiating between permanent and precarious incomes. It will be for the Committee to determine whether the investigation of such a question as that referred to by my hon. friend will help them in forming their conclusions.

Royal Prerogative of Mercy.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the number of persons who have been released from prison, or whose sentences have been modified upon the advice of the Home Office, since the release of Mr. Adolf Beck; and whether he will give the names of the judges or magistrates by whom such persons were sentenced.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): The Judicial Statistics give, every year, the numbers of, and some particulars relating to, the cases in which the prerogative of mercy is exercised on the advice of the Secretary of State; but I cannot undertake to give the names of the Judges and of the magistrates composing the Courts by whom these prisoners were sentenced.

Servants' Registry Office Fees.

MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if, in consequence of the frequency of cases of excessive fees charged by registry offices to male applicants for situations, and the declarations of the police of their powerlessness to interfere under the existing law in such cases, he will consider the desirability of amending the law relating to employment agencies so that it shall include registries for males, and so as to fix the scale of charges at a registry office, as is done in certain foreign countries.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have no information before me at present which would point to the desirability of regulating the charges made at registry offices. At present registry offices are not regulated by the general law at all, though as the hon. Member is perhaps aware, certain powers of control in regard to employment agencies for women have been obtained by London and also by Manchester in private Acts. The question of the regulation of employment agencies is no doubt an important one, and I shall be happy to consider any facts that may be laid before me.

German Gipsies in Scotland.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of

State for the Home Department whether he is aware of the concern caused in Leith and elsewhere in Scotland by the arrival of further detachments of German gipsies; and whether he will take steps to guard against the evasion of a leading provision of the Aliens Act.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I can only refer my hon. friend to the Answer I gave yesterday to the hon. Member for North Ayrshire, † to which I have nothing to add.

Factory Inspectors' Certificates.

MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the difference in the certificates issued to assistant inspectors in 1893 by the then Home Secretary and those issued in 1902, the former empowering assistants to inspect all factories and workshops and the latter limiting their inspection to workshops only; and whether he would reissue the former certificates to assistants whose period of service and efficiency would, in his opinion, qualify them for exercising the larger powers.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, the form of certificate was changed in 1897, but in order to prevent misunderstandings, and not as a result of any change in the duties assigned to the assistants. From the time the class was instituted in 1893, the duties of the assistants have been confined to workshops and they never have inspected factories. As regards the suggestion in the last part of the Question, I may say that the question of the position and duties of the assistants is now under my consideration.

Assistant Factory Inspectors' Allowances.

MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department upon what principle the extra allowance of £25 has been alloted to ten assistant factory inspectors; and whether he proposes to limit the number who receive this extra allowance to ten.

*MR. GLADSTONE: On the recommendation of my predecessor, the Treasury recently sanctioned the grant of ten allowances (including one already in existence) of £25, to be given to assistants doing specially responsible work. The assistants to whom the allowances have been alloted were selected after due consideration of the qualifications and length of service of the different members of the class. As I have already stated the question of the position of the inspector's assistants is now under my consideration.

Local Education Authorities.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, if any municipal authority, the London County Council, or any provincial council, being a local education authority under the Education Acts of 1902 and 1903 desire at any time to increase its membership with a view to the better control of the public education in its area, it would be competent to do so under any existing statute or statutes; and, if so, whether he will indicate such statute or statutes, and state further the course which such municipal authority would need to pursue.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The local bodies referred to cannot themselves alter the number of their members. The number of members of the London County Council is fixed by the Local Government Act, 1888, and legislation would probably be necessary to alter it. The number of members of any other county council could be altered by the Local Government Board on a representation under Section 54 of the Act, and a county council can alter the number of members of the council of any urban district other than a borough. The number of members of a town council cannot usually be altered, unless in connection with an alteration of the borough or its division into wards.

London Water Supply.

MR. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, with the view of improving the London water supplies, he will consider the advisability of compelling, by legislation or otherwise, the use of the process now in existence, which is capable of dealing satisfactorily with contaminated water by completely destroying all pathogenic bacteria remaining in the supply after sand filtration.

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† See Col. 554.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I am not sure what is the particular process to which my hon. friend refers. The Metropolitan Water Board have before them the question of the research work to be undertaken with a view to determining whether the present system of purification of the London water cannot be still further improved, and every practicable means of obtaining the best results will, no doubt, be thoroughly investigated. The matter does not appear to me to be one for compulsory action by legislation, or otherwise, at the present time.

Woodford and Wanstead Joint Hospital.

MR. SIMON (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether a request was received by the Local Government Board from the Woodford Urban District Council for the issue of a Provisional Order authorising the provision of a joint hospital for the districts of Woodford and Wanstead; if so, what was the date of the request; when were the preliminary formalities complied with; when was the local inquiry held; did the Board decide to issue a Provisional Order; if so, when was that decision arrived at; and what is the explanation of the delay in communicating this decision to the local authority and in carrying the decision out into law.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The original application for the Provisional Order came from both the Woodford and Wanstead Urban District Councils, and was made in February, 1902. The Local Government Board directed an inquiry to be held, but at the instance of the Wanstead District Council it was deferred to enable the parties to agree on the terms of the proposed Order. They failed, however, to agree, and ultimately the Wanstead Urban District Council withdrew their application. Some action was taken by the Essex County Council with a view to forming a hospital district and, with the concurrence of the Woodford District Council, the inquiry as to the Provisional Order was postponed pending the decision of the county council on this scheme, and it was not until the autumn of 1904 that the case was ready for an inquiry as to the Provisional Order to be held. It took place on November 30th, 1904. After the inquiry the Board had some correspondence with the parties, but there was considerable opposition to the proposal and no definite decision was arrived at. The case has recently been again under consideration. There are difficulties with regard to it, but a communication will very shortly be made to the local authorities definitely deciding the matter.

Disabled Soldiers and Sailors.

MR. MORRELL (Oxfordshire, Henley): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can now inform the House that steps will be taken to prevent paupers, whose destitution is due to injuries received during their service in His Majesty's forces, from being chargeable to local rates.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I caused a letter to be sent to the Admiralty and the War Office informing them of the communications which I had received on this subject. I have not at present heard from the former Department with regard to the matter, but I have received a communication from the Army Council in which it is explained that, in all cases where a soldier has established a reasonable claim to be compensated by the State for disablement resulting from Army service, provision exists for awarding him a pension. It is added that should there be any discharged soldiers in workhouses who are without pensions, or with small pensions, and who can be shown to be suffering from disabilities directly due to military service, their cases will always receive careful investigation on being brought to the notice of the Secretary, Royal Hospital, Chelsea. I propose to issue a circular to boards of guardians informing them of the effect of the communication from the Army Council.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): Will it apply to Ireland also?

MR. JOHN BURNS: That is a matter for the Irish Government. I will, however, consult the Chief Secretary.

London Sortership Examinations.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the examinations for sorters in the General Post Office are all held in London only; and, if so, whether, for the convenience of Irish candidates, examinations could be also held in Dublin, Belfast, Cork, and other Irish centres.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Examinations for London sorterships are held in London only. It is the general practice of my Department in recruiting this class, and the class of sorting clerks and telegraphists throughout the kingdom, to hold local examinations for local vacancies.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the great inconvenience and expense caused to candidates from Ireland?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Yes, but there would also be great difficulty and expense if the opposite course were adopted.

Amble and the Telephone Service.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether it is his intention to include the town of Amble within the Alnwick telephone area; and, if so, can he state when the work is likely to be completed.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am considering what is the best method of extending the telephone system to Amble, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Sailors and Soldiers and the Foreign Parcels Postage Rates.

MR. SNOWDON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will make some special reduction in the postage rate for parcels sent to men serving in the Army and Navy abroad.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Under our parcel post agreements with the various Colonies and foreign countries this proposal would not be practicable.

Registration Claims and the Halfpenny Post.

MR. WATERLOW (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the extension of the privileges under the halfpenny book-post, foreshadowed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, will provide that claims of occupiers and lodgers to be placed on the register of electors will pass through the post at the halfpenny rate.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The details of the concessions as regards the halfpenny post are under consideration.

Horticultural Instruction in Elementary Schools.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether measures are being taken by the Education Department to give effect to the recommendations of the Departmental Committee of the Board of Agriculture on the Fruit Industry, that horticulture should be taught in elementary schools in country districts, and that such schools should have gardens attached where possible; that the attention of the local education authorities should be called to this, and also to the desirability of encouraging the study of practical horticulture in training colleges.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I must refer the hon. Member to the reply which I gave on this subject on March 28th.† I have nothing to add to that reply.

Grant in Aid of Education Rates.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is in a position to make any statement respecting the Board's scheme for the allocation of the £135,000 special aid grant promised on behalf of heavily rated areas in the Budget; and whether he will furnish a Return showing how much of the sum in question will be given to each recipient area.

MR. BIRRELL: The hon. Member is under a misapprehension in thinking that the special aid grant referred to is a specific sum of £135,000 which is to be distributed amongst a definite number of local authorities. That sum is merely an estimate of the maximum sum likely to be required within the present financial year for the purposes of the grant. The scheme of the special grant (which is strictly temporary) is that the Government undertake to pay to each authority whose expenditure under Part III. of the Education Act to be met from local rates has in the previous year exceeded the produce of an eighteen-penny rate a grant amounting to three-fourths of that excess. There are various necessary conditions and safeguards, incident to a grant of this kind, which will be set out in the Regulations for the grant which I hope shortly to issue. I am unable at present to give an exact list of the places which will certainly fall within the conditions above-named, or the precise amount which any place will in fact receive, until complete information is obtained from each authority as to the sums actually expended from the rates under Part III. of the Education Act in the preceding year. But, so soon as the Regulations are issued, each local authority will be able to work out approximately for itself (from its own expenditure records) the probable amount, if any, which it will receive.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1252.

DR. MACNAMARA: Is it intended that the grant shall be for one year only?

MR. BIRRELL: That is so.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in addition to the £135,000 new special aid grant promised in the Budget, the education authorities for necessitous areas will be eligible to receive for the year ending 31st March, 1907, all existing grants, including the special aid grant provided for in Section 10 of the Act of 1902.

MR. BIRRELL: Yes, Sir.

Secondary Schools—Registry of Teachers.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he has considered the probable effect of abolishing the register of teachers on secondary schools at present inspected by the Board of Education with a view to the admission of their teachers to the register; and whether he anticipates that in consequence many of such schools will cease to seek recognition or undergo inspection by the Board.

MR. BIRRELL: The Board have given their careful attention to the points referred to in the Question and are considering the possibility of establishing a list of efficient secondary schools, whether grant-aided or not. A very thorough inspection would be a necessary preliminary to the placing of a school upon such a list. Such recognition would, in consequence, be of much greater value to the schools so recognised than the limited recognition in connection with the teachers' register, which was accorded without any stringent conditions and tests of inspection or otherwise.

Withdrawal from Religious Instruction in Elementary Schools.

MR. ROGERS (Wiltshire, Devizes): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state the number of local education authorities which have adopted By-law 3 in the model form of by-laws issued in the Elementary School Code, which by-law, if adopted, removes from the parent any obligation to cause his child to attend school except during the time allotted in the time-table exclusively to secular instruction.

MR BIRRELL: Ninety-four local education authorities have adopted the by-law, under which a parent is enabled to withdraw his child from the school premises during the period of instruction in religious subjects. These ninety-four local authorities consist of thirty-seven counties, eight county boroughs, thirty-six boroughs, and thirteen urban districts.

MR. ASHLEY asked if permission to withdraw was conditional in any way.

MR. BIRRELL: I believe it to be unconditional.

Apprenticeship Endowments.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether under the Education Bill it is proposed to give the authorities control over endowments which are for apprenticeship; if so, will an amending clause be inserted safe-guarding such endowments for apprenticeship.

MR. BIRRELL: It is hardly possible to explain the provisions of the Bill satisfactorily within the the limits of an Answer, and there will ample opportunity during the Committee stage. I may, however, assure the hon. Member that the Board are giving careful attention to the question of apprenticeships.

Electric Generating Stations—Injury to Trees.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the Memorandum of the Commissioners of Works on Electric Power and Supply Bills, he will take steps to give effect to the views of the Commissioners on the subject of damage to trees and shrubs by smoke and other products of combustion, in connection with the London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill at present before a Committee of this House, and particularly to procure the omission of Clause 3 (2) of that Bill.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): I have no doubt that the Committee of this House to whom the London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill is referred will give full consideration to the views of the Commissioners of Works with respect to possible injury to trees and shrubs by smoke and other products of combustion from generating stations, and I will confer with my right. hon. friend the First Commissioner as to the way in which these views can be brought before the Committee. The particular clause referred to is based on the recommendation of the Joint Committee of the two Houses (which considered the subject in 1898) to the effect that where a site for a generating station is acquired under compulsory powers, and is specified in the special Act, the undertakers should not be subjected to any further liability than that which is imposed by the common law in the case of persons exercising statutory powers and duties. It is for the Committee to decide on the evidence submitted to them whether any particular site should or should not be so exempted.

Epizootic Lymphangitis.

MR. G. A. HARDY (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, the number of cases of epizootic lymphangitis in civilian stables which have occurred in Great Britain since this disease was introduced by means of service horses returned from South Africa, the localities in which these cases occurred, the course taken to prevent the further spread of infection, and whether the owners of affected horses have been compensated for the losses which they have sustained through this disease; and, if so, whether the compensation was paid by the Government, or was, by order of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, required to be paid by the local authority.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): Six outbreaks of epizootic lymphangitis have occurred in civilian stables, viz., three in London, and one in each of the counties of Kent, Hertford, and Lanark. In each case steps were at once taken to place all animals under control which might have been exposed to infection. In two instances compensa- was paid by the local authority acting under an Order of the Board of Agriculture.

Liverpool Victoria Legal Friendly Society.

MR. SNOWDEN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that a movement is on foot to turn the Liverpool Victoria Legal Friendly Society into a limited liability assurance company; and as, according to Sections 71 and 74 of the Friendly Societies Act of 1896, this can be done by the consent of three-fourths of the members present at a general meeting duly called for this purpose, he will consider the question of altering the law in regard to such procedure, in view of the impracticability of the present procedure, as in the case mentioned where there are 2,577,353 members residing in all parts of the country.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): No application has so far been made to the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies by the Liverpool Victoria Legal Friendly Society under Section 71, Sub-sections (1) and (2) of the Friendly Societies Act, 1896. I must call the attention of the hon. Member to the fact that under Section 74 of the Act votes may be given either in person or by proxy if the rules so permit.

Loyal Cranmer Orange Friendly Society, Blackburn.

MR. SNOWDEN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been called to the expulsion of certain members of the Loyal Cranmer Orange Friendly Society, Blackburn, for having supported a particular candidate at the late general election; and, seeing that in the registered rules of such society there is no power under which the society can expel members and deprive them of benefits for political actions, and as such expelled members have suffered considerable financial loss by the expulsion, will he say if the Registrar General of Friendly Societies proposes to take any steps to secure the readmission of the expelled members.

Mr. McKENNA: My attention has not been called to the expulsion of certain members of the Loyal Cranmer Orange Friendly Society. If any member has any dispute with the society or its committee or officers, Rule 26 of the rules of the society gives power for such dispute to be referred to justices pursuant to the Friendly Societies Act. The Chief Registrar has no power to interfere.

Mr. SNOWDEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General if his attention has been called to the expulsion of certain Members of the Loyal Cranmer Friendly Society, Blackburn, for having, at the late General Election, supported a particular candidate, and as under the registered rules of the society there is nothing to justify such expulsion, will he state if he proposes to take any action in the matter.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. Robson, South Shields): I am not aware that the attention of the Attorney-General has been called to this matter, but if it is suggested that an offence has been committed in relation to the facts referred to by the hon. Member, and those facts are laid before the Director of Public Prosecutions, they will be duly considered.

Army Excess Votes.

Colonel HERBERT (Monmouthshire, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, with reference to Treasury Minute 5283/06 of March 28th, 1906, he can furnish the House with a statement of the Votes for Army Services, 1905-6, from which the estimated excess of £783,000 is expected to accrue whether any steps are being taken by the Treasury to ensure that the Estimates of the spending departments for the year 1906–7 shall be framed with a more accurate regard to the actual requirements of the several services; and whether the Treasury proposes to apply any check to the practice whereby expenditure unauthorised by Parliament can be covered by the appropriation of balances arising from inaccurate Estimates.

Mr. McKENNA: The principal savings were effected on the following Votes: Quarterings, Transport, and Remounts £107,000; Supplies and Clothing £338,000; Ordnance establishments and general stores £78,000, and Works £87,000. The Estimates for 1906–7 were presented to the House in March, and it is therefore not possible in the current year to take any special steps in the direction indicated. No expenditure which involves an excess upon a Vote or even, generally speaking, upon a sub-head of a Vote can be incurred without the sanction of the Treasury, and I would point out that the Treasury Minute of March 28th last sanctions excesses of expenditure to the extent of £92,000 being met out of savings estimated to amount to £783,000. I desire also to say that, as was shown incidentally in connection with the Navy Supplementary Estimate of this session, the Treasury aims at greater stringency for the future in the exercise of the temporary powers of transfer between Vote and Vote which are annually conferred by the Appropriation Act in respect of Navy and Army Services.

Crown Lands as School Sites.

Mr. ROGERS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is the practice of the Woods and Forests Commissioners to present sites and to make monetary grants out of their revenues for the purpose of assisting the building of non-provided elementary schools; and, if so, whether he will take steps to ensure that, in future, such grants, whether of land or of money, are not made except to schools under public control and in which teachers are subject to no disabling tests.

Mr. McKENNA: The power to make grants of Crown Lands as sites for schools which was given by Section 45 of the Crown Lands Act, 1829, was taken away by the Crown Lands Act, 1894; but Section 5 of the latter Act provides that the Commissioners of Woods may, with the consent of the Treasury, make donations of money out of the income of the Land Revenues of the Crown for any educational purposes connected with land under the management of the Commissioners. Since the passing of the Education Act, 1902, a certain number of donations have been made in cases where the amount of the voluntary contributions and other circumstances seemed to justify it, but no further promises of donations will be made whilst the present Education Bill is before Parliament.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N): Where can I get information as to the amount of property held by the Commissioners?

MR. McKENNA: If the hon. Member will speak to me privately I will show him it.

Law of Divorce—Justice Gorell Barne's Observations.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether his attention has been called to the observations of Mr. Justice Gorell Barnes on the question of divorce in England; and whether he will be prepared to consider the propriety of bringing the Divorce Law of England into conformity with that of Scotland and other civilised countries.

SIR W. ROBSON: I believe my hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General is aware of the observations referred to in the Question. I do not think that either he or I is entitled in the present state of public business to say that the Government are likely to introduce any legislation on the subject.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: With regard to the last sentence in the Question will the hon. and learned Gentleman and the House bear in mind that the most civilised country in the world, Ireland, has no divorce law.

MR. FLAVIN asked when England ceased to be a civilised country.

MR. EUGENE WASON said the words at the end of his Question were not his but those of the learned Judge.

Crofting Counties Schools.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state how many schools attended by Gaelic-speaking children in each of the crofting counties would be entitled to participate in the grant contemplated in Section 2, Sub-section C (2), of the Scotch Education Department Minute of March 19th, 1906, taking as a basis the teaching staff in attendance at each such school last year.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The Department has no information in its possession to enable it to answer this Question with sufficient accuracy.

Kessock Ferry.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland having regard to the fact that the inhabitants on the Ross-shire side of Kessock Ferry have appealed for suitable boats to be placed on the service, on the ground that the present boats are very old and quite unfit for the work, will he state whether any arrangements have yet been made to provide suitable boats.

MR. SINCLAIR: The Secretary for Scotland has no jurisdiction and no information in regard to the ferry in question.

Scottish Congested Districts Board Report.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state when the Report of the Congested Districts Board for Scotland will be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. SINCLAIR: The Report will be laid upon the Table to-day.

Telephone in Scottish Prisons.

MR. WATT (Glasgow College): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if his attention has been called to the statement on page 14 of Code 218, 1900, in the Report of the Departmental Committee on Scottish Prisons, to the effect that the chairman of the Prison Commissioners objects to telephones, but they are now a recognised convenience for the transaction of business, and might be introduced with advantage into the general service of prisons; and if he will explain why nothing has been done to give effect to the Committee's recommendations.

MR. SINCLAIR: Treasury consent has been given to the connection of the Commissioners' Office and the two Glasgow Prisons with the Exchange, and steps will be taken to have telephones introduced.

Glasgow Prison Warders' Grievance.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that at a lecture on the Sunny Land of Spain, given in Barlinnie Prison, Glasgow, on February 9th, 1906, nineteen warders were detained on duty for two hours and twenty-five minutes, and thirty-five warders for forty-five minutes, without any financial allowance or without being granted leave of absence for an equal time; and if he will take steps to remedy this grievance of the warders.

MR. SINCLAIR: No financial allowance has been given. One warder has been allowed leave in lieu, but others have not asked for it. They will be granted leave in lieu when they apply for it.

German Gipsies in Scotland.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the police are unable to give the public protection from the bands of German gipsies who constitute such a nuisance in Scotland.

MR. SINCLAIR: All complaints that have been received have been investigated, and my information is that the police have not failed to afford the public due protection. If the hon. Member will furnish me with information as to instances to the contrary, inquiries shall at once be instituted.

Scottish Fishery Cruisers.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, seeing that with a view to the purchase of an additional fishery cruiser the Secretary for Scotland had a year ago saved a sum of £7,000 out of moneys placed at his disposal for fishery purposes, will he state whether a sufficient sum has now accumulated to admit of the purchase of a new cruiser for the protection of the interests of the line fishermen.

MR. SINCLAIR: A sum sufficient to purchase a new cruiser has not yet been accumulated.

MR. WEIR: How long will it take to accumulate the sum required?

MR. SINCLAIR: A considerable time.

Island of Lewis Evictions.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of Scotland whether, in view of the fact that Major Matheson of Lewis Castle, the proprietor of the Island of Lewis, is now carrying out evictions of landless cottars who have built at their own expense substantial stone houses on waste land, he proposes to take steps to stay further evictions and to protect these men (chiefly fishermen) with their wives and children from such cruel and inhuman treatment.

MR. SINCLAIR: The information I have received respecting Andrew Finlayson and John Campbell North Tolsta referred to in the hon. Member's letter of April 25th is as follows: Finlayson was warned in February, 1903, that he would not be allowed to build a house on the common grazing. This warning was repeated the following month. As he nevertheless continued to build he was interdicted in May, 1903. In spite of the interdict he continued operations, and in April, 1904, he was observed to be roofing his house. Warning was then sent, and was repeated in May, 1904. The following August he was found in possession, and in June, 1905, he was evicted. On eviction the proprietor offered to find him rooms in Stornoway, but this offer was refused, and he went to live in the Missionary House. In October he re-entered the house, and the same step was taken by Campbell, the other squatter referred to. The proprietor refrained during the winter months from taking action. These men had squatted on land not in occupation of the proprietor, but in that of the crofters, in defiance of Section 1 (4) of the Crofters Act of 1886. As the hon. Member knows, the condition of the Lews and of the crofting districts generally is under the serious consideration of the Government.

Ireland and the Poor Prisoners' Defence Act.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether, seeing the manner in which the Poor Prisoners' Defence Act of 1904 is working in England, and in view of the desirability of introducing similar provisions in Ireland, he will have this humane statute extended to that country at an early date.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): I agree with the hon. Member as to the desirability of extending the Poor Prisoners' Defence Act of 1903 to Ireland, but in the present state of Parliamentary business I fear I cannot make any promise to introduce a Bill dealing with the subject.

Irish Land Act Administration—Purchase Price and Arrears of Rent.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutentant of Ireland whether in cases of sales within the zones, under the Land Act of 1903, any record was kept prior to 1906, and is any record being kept now, of arrears of rent included in the purchase price; has the bonus been paid, or is it being paid, on the gross price including arrears; is there any authority in the Act, or analogy in any Act, for the State paying a bonus on the amount of a civil debt which has been recovered without cost; and seeing that tenants in debt are embarrasssed and, therefore, not free agents, will this peculiar method of obtaining public money through them be stopped.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): I am informed by the Land Commission that no such record has been, or is being, kept. Under Section 48, Sub-section (1), of the Act of 1903, the bonus or percentage is payable on the amount of the purchase money advanced under the Land Purchase Acts, subject to the proviso that the bonus is not to be paid in respect of any land re-sold to the vendor. When once the advances have been sanctioned and the purchase money paid into court, the statute provides that where at the date of the agreement for purchase arrears of rent were due in respect of any holding on the estate, a sum equivalent in amount to those arrears, but not exceeding in any case one year's rent, shall be paid out of the purchase money to the person who would have been entitled to receive those arrears for his own use. The statute contains no provision excluding the portion of the purchase money so applied from the calculation of the bonus under Section 48, and it has been judicially decided that the bonus must be calculated and paid in accordance with the statute without deduction. The objection taken in the Question to the present practice is therefore really an objection to the terms of the statute.

Land Valuations.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in view of the practice of the Irish Land Commission in having valuations made, recorded, and calculated in a way differing from that laid down by statute, and giving decisions without stating any grounds upon which they are based, and the dissatisfaction which the Fry Commission reported to exist on account of this practice, and its present aggravation and continuance, whether he will have the practice of the Commission brought into conformity with the statute and with the practice of other courts.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that this Question is founded upon a misapprehension. As I have stated in reply to a previous Question of the hon. and learned Member, the practice of the Land Commission in having valuations made, recorded, and calculated is, they inform me, in accordance with the statutory provisions concerned. The schedules attached to all orders fixing fair rents set out in detail the various facts and circumstances considered, and in cases in which a special judgment is called for the reasons for the decision are stated in open court.

Estates Commissioners' Inspectors.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will grant a Return relating to inspectors in the service of the Estates

Commissioners similar to Parliamentary Paper, No. 151, of session 1902; and, if so, will it be necessary for a private Member to move for it.

Mr. BRYCE: No objection will be offered to the proposed Return if the hon. Member should move for it.

Abbeyleix Police.

Mr. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the district inspector, head constable, and sergeant of the Royal Irish Constabulary, stationed at Abbeyleix, Queen's County, are Protestants, which is contrary to the arrangement that at least one of the officers at any station should be a Catholic; whether he is aware that seven-tenths of the police at this station and 80 per cent. of the population are Catholic; and will he give instructions that one, at least, of the officers in charge at this station should be a Catholic.

Mr. BRYCE: The inspector-general informs me that of the police force at present stationed at Abbeyleix, the district inspector, head constable, one sergeant, and two constables, are Protestants, and that one acting-sergeant and five constables are Roman Catholics. It is, I understand, the fact that 80 per cent. of the population of Abbeyleix are Roman Catholics. There is no arrangement or rule universally applied that one of the officers at any station should be a Catholic, though this is usually the case. The Inspector-General is not aware that there is any dissatisfaction with the present arrangement of the force at Abbeyleix. The allocation of the men is regulated in accordance with public requirements.

Irish Afforestation.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to appoint a Commission of Inquiry into the subject of afforestation in Ireland.

Mr. BRYCE: An Advisory Committee on Forestry has already been appointed by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction at the instance of the Council of Agriculture. I am considering the question whether it may not be desirable to institute a further inquiry into the subject, but I am not at present prepared to make any definite statement on the matter.

Royal University.

Mr LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the position of Chancellor of the Royal University is still vacant; or whether he is in a position to announce the name of the new Chancellor.

Mr. BRYCE: The position in question has not yet been filled, and I am consequently unable to make an announcement on the subject. The matter is at this moment under the consideration of the Irish Government.

Mr. SLOAN: What is the cause of the delay?

Mr. BRYCE: Personal questions always give rise to delay.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has any information showing that the Senate of the Royal University are taking steps to punish the students who were guilty of disloyal and disorderly conduct at the last conferring of degrees, or to prevent the recurrence of such disturbances.

Mr. BRYCE: I am imformed by the Secretaries of the Royal University that the matter in question is under the consideration of the Senate.

Annaghmore Disturbances.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that on Monday, April 16th, when a Protestant band was passing in a peaceable manner through Annaghmore, county Armagh, in order to attend the opening of an Orange hall at Cranagil, an unprovoked attack was made upon them by a number of Nationalists who were strangers to the neighbourhood; whether the police authorities had previous knowledge that such an attack was possible, and whether they took any steps to prevent it; and whether it is the intention of the Government to take proceedings against the persons who provoked this breach of the peace.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that proceedings are being taken against offenders on both sides, and, following the invariable practice, I must decline to make any statement in the matter while the proceedings are *sub judice.*

MR. LONSDALE: Did the right hon. Gentleman say offenders on both sides?

MR. BRYCE: Yes.

MR. LONSDALE: They were only on one side.

MR. BRYCE: My information is the other way.

MR. LONSDALE: Considering the source from which the right hon. Gentleman gets his information, I am not surprised.

Chancellorship of the Royal University.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the selection of a person for the position of Chancellor of the Royal University of Ireland, care will be taken to choose one who will insist upon adequate measures being taken to prevent riotous and disloyal demonstrations on the occasion of the conferring of degrees.

MR. BRYCE: In making this appointment due regard will be had to the high dignity of the office.

Irish Fisheries.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a Resolution from the County Council of Clare to the effect that the present Government, in view of the inquiry into the working of the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Department, has an excellent opportunity of placing the sea and fresh water fisheries on a popularly sound and practical basis, by appointing a representative Fishery Board as in Scotland, with thoroughly competent and practical experts as inspectors, and establishing a Government brand for mackerel and herrings; and will he say what action he will take in this Question.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): May I also ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a Resolution adopted by the Cork County Council, at a special meeting held on the 26th ultimo, with regard to the establishment of a representative Fishery Board for Ireland; and if this matter will be considered by the Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Department.

MR. BRYCE: I have received the Resolutions referred to and have transmitted them to the Committee of Inquiry into the working of the Department, as it seems to me that the subject is a fit one for the consideration of the Committee.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman call the special attention of the Committee of Inquiry on the Working of the Board of Agriculture to the expediency of doing something to develop the fisheries on the Irish coast?

MR. BRYCE: If the hon. Member cares to address a special communication to me on the subject I will forward it to the Committee.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): Is this Committee always to sit in London?

MR. BRYCE: No. It will have a great many sittings in Ireland.

Head Constable Spence, Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. MEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Head Constable Spence, stationed at Abbeyleix, Queen's County, is engaged in promoting a sect which is giving offence to both Catholic and Protestant people in the district; and that he attends constantly at a house at Tullyroe, adjacent to Abbeyleix, for the purpose of preaching and otherwise spending his time promoting his views; whether he will take steps to oblige this policeman to give his time to his duties for which he is paid by the public, and is he aware that this head constable so arranges the discipline and hours of duty for the Catholic constables as to prevent them from attending mass on Catholic holy days of obligation.

MR. BRYCE: It would appear that the hon. Member has been misinformed. I have referred this Question to the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary, who informs me, on the authority of the local district inspector, that there is no foundation for any of the statements contained in the Question.

MR. MEEHAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman order an independent inquiry? I can assure the right hon. Gentleman from personal inquiry his information is wrong.

MR. BRYCE: I think the answer of the officer is entitled to some respect as first-hand evidence.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): In view of the fact that there is the personal denial of the constable for a contrary statement by the Member for the Division, cannot the right hon. Gentleman further inquire?

MR. BRYCE: I will make any inquiry that may be wished, but, judging from the information which has reached me, I do not think the matter is one on which there can be much doubt.

De Freyne Estate.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that it is now about twelve months since the Congested Districts Board acquired the De Freyne Estate for the purpose of transferring it to the tenant occupiers; whether any progress has been made with the work; and, pending the transfer, what facilities are given to the tenants in the matter of turbary and water.

MR. BRYCE: The estate in question has not yet been vested in the Congested Districts Board, who are therefore not yet able to sell it to the tenants or to make any alterations in the holdings. It is a very large estate, and many questions are involved, requiring time. The Board, however, have commenced to make such improvements as will not interfere with the boundaries of the holdings. The tenants continue to enjoy the same facilities in regard to turbary and water as they possessed before the Board arranged to purchase.

Irish School Building Plans.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, in conjunction with the Commissioners of National Education, announced about four years ago that they intended to issue new plans for the construction of national schools; that they have since neglected to do so; that inconvenience and delay is caused to managers proposing to build schools by the absence of any standard plan or plans, except those which were declared obsolete: whether the correspondence which was proceeding in November last between the Treasury, the Irish Government, and the Commissioners of National Education, on matters relating to school building grants, is still proceeding; and whether, seeing that a number of managers proposing to replace schools which have been condemned as unsanitary by new schools are, in effect, being delayed for a full year in providing the new schools, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. MCKENNA: The delay in issuing general plans, which I regret, is not due to the neglect of the Board of Works or any Department, but to the difficulty of arriving at an agreement. Correspondence is still proceeding, but I will do everything I can towards expediting a settlement.

MR. O'SHEE: When is the correspondence likely to end? It has been going on six months now.

MR. MCKENNA: I am doing my utmost to expedite it.

North of Ireland Mail Service.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can now state the result of his inquiry with the view of arranging for a dispatch of mails by the train leaving Tynan at 6.40 p.m. to proceed to England *viâ* Greenore, and to Scotland by way of Belfast and Ardrossan.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have made inquiry on the question of affording a despatch from Caledon by the 6.40 p.m. train from Tynan Station; but I regret to find that the amount of correspondence for England and Scotland (which amounts to only about twelve letters a day) is not sufficient to justify the expense which would be involved.

Public Accounts Committee's Reports.

Mr. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can see his way to adopt the recommendation of the Select Committee on National Expenditure in 1903 that a new rule of Supply should ensure that at least one day should be provided for consideration of Reports of the Public Accounts Committee and the Treasury Minutes thereon.

I beg also to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can see his way to adopt the recommendation of the Select Committee on National Expenditure in 1903, that an Estimates Committee should be appointed at the beginning of each session to consider in detail a particular part of the Estimates for the current year, such particular part to be chosen for them in the previous year by the Public Accounts Committee.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): I have nothing to add to the Answer which I gave to my hon. friend the Member for Clackmannan and Kinross on March 1st.† I then expressed the opinion that a reasonable opportunity should be given for the Report of the Public Accounts Committee being discussed by the House of Commons. I also expressed the opinion—if my hon. friend will allow me to answer his next Question at the same time—that the manner in which the financial control of the House of Commons should be exercised was eminently a matter for the Committee of Procedure to consider.

Crofters Bill.

Mr. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now say when the Crofters Acts Amendment Bill will be introduced.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am afraid I cannot yet name a day for the introduction of the Crofters Bill, but, as my hon. friend is no doubt aware, every effort is being made to push forward the preparation of the Bill.

The Prime Minister.

Mr. PAUL (Northampton): Before I ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will put down the salary of the Secretary of State for War for discussion in Committee of Supply on Thursday, May 10, or Thursday, May 17, Mr. Speaker, will you kindly give your ruling on a point of order? When I put down a Question addressed to the "Prime Minister," those words are struck out at the Table and the words "First Lord of the Treasury" are substituted. I understood that the King had been pleased to confer the style and title of Prime Minister, and appropriate precedence, on the head of his Government, and that it was, therefore, now the official designation of the right hon. Gentleman. And I have observed for my guidance that you yourself, Sir, make use of it when you call on the right hon. Gentleman in debate. Perhaps you will be good enough to say, for the information of the House, and of the Table, whether I rightly apprehend the significance of His Majesty's most gracious act.

*Mr. SPEAKER: This Question which the hon. Gentleman has put to me is one, I think, of which notice ought to be given, though I am afraid it is not usual to give notice of Questions to the Speaker. If I am asked to decide the Question at a moment's notice, I should say that Prime Minister was the proper designation. I always so refer to the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. PAUL: I beg to thank you most respectfully, Sir, for your reply, and to ask the Prime Minister the Question.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I hope my hon. friend will find that the rose by either name will give the same answer. I fear that the arrangements for public business will not admit of either of the days named being appropriated for the War Office Vote; but I am aware of the undertaking that was given in the matter, and I hope that there will be an early opportunity of fulfilling it.

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† See (4) *Debates* clii., 1298–9.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): Is it not the custom for the choice of the subjects taken in Committee of Supply to be regulated, in a large measure, after consultation with the minority of the House? Will that arrangement continue to be observed?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, I think it is the usual practice at any rate; but it is a practice against which I have always protested, because I have always had the impression that the Government, being responsible for the conduct of business, ought not to put upon the Opposition, or any minority, the responsibility of the choice of the subject of the day. But as a matter of courtsey and convenience, of course, the wishes of the Opposition will be duly consulted.

Scottish Supply.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now fix a day for the discussion of the Scotch Supply.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am afraid that I cannot give my hon. friend a definite answer at the moment as to when Scotch Supply will be taken.

Church Endowments in Wales.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when it is proposed to appoint the Commission of Inquiry to examine into the question of the endowments and the present position of the Church of England in Wales; whether the scope of inquiry has been determined upon; and whether he will now give the names of the members of the Commission.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I hope there will be no great delay in the appointment of this Royal Commission. I am not in a position to give my hon. friend the exact terms of reference, but the Commission will inquire into the origin and history of the endowments of the Church of England in Wales, and will ascertain what provision is made by all the religious denominations for the spiritual needs of the people. I am afraid I cannot give my hon. friend the names of the Commissioners, but I may inform him that the King has approved of the appointment of Lord Justice Vaughan Williams as chairman.

Depopulation of Rural Districts.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the House will be in possession of the measures promised in the gracious Speech from the Throne, dealing with the social and economic conditions of the rural districts in Great Britain, by which a larger number of the population is to be attracted to and retained on the soil.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The answer to the hon. Gentleman's Question is that no measures of the kind were promised in the King's Speech. The inquiries into the economic conditions of the rural districts to which allusion was made are still proceeding.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE EDUCATION BILL.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): Will the Prime Minister state what will be the course of business next week?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The business will commence on Monday with the Second Reading of the Education Bill. We propose to devote to the debate Monday and Tuesday, and the Government's share of Wednesday, and then to postpone the business of Supply on Thursday, and to conclude the debate on the Second Reading on Thursday night. Of course, another day will be given for purposes of Supply.

NEW BILL.

LONDON TRAFFIC BOARD BILL.

"To establish a London Traffic Board," presented by Sir John Dickson-Poynder; to be read a second time upon Monday, May 28th, and to be printed. [Bill 189.]

LAND VALUES TAXATION, &c. (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland be a Member of the Select Committee on the Land Values Taxation, &c. (Scotland) Bill :—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) objected to the composition of the Committee because, while the question was one of very great importance to all classes who were interested in property which sprang from land values, there was an overwhelming majority of the Committee absolutely committed to one view of the question. Further, he objected that, while nominally a Scottish Bill—the precedent would apply both to England and Ireland—the Committee was almost exclusively composed of Scotsmen.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Can this discussion proceed an indefinite time ?

*MR. SPEAKER: A brief statement is permissible, as the matter comes within the so-called Ten Minutes Rule.

MR. HAROLD COX said he would be very brief. But his opinion was that it was very important to have other than purely Scottish representatives on the Committee. Why had the hon. Member for the Elland Division been put on—in view of his known advocacy of the Bill—while the Member for Spen Valley—who had shown his impartiality by speaking against and voting for the Bill—had been ignored. Then the Lord-Advocate had promised to use his influence to ensure that the inquiry should be very brief.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (MR. THOMAS SHAW, Hawick Burghs): No.

MR. HAROLD COX said that at any rate in view of some remarks by the Lord-Advocate, he asked for an assurance that no undue pressure would be placed on the Committee to rush the Bill through. Finally, he wanted it made clear that the Bill should not be retrospective in its action.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to go into that,

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) stated that the Bill was supported almost unanimously by hon. Members on the Ministerial side. The usual course as between Parties in the House was followed in the composition of the Committee. The practice was for the Government to select eight Members, the Opposition four, the Irish Party two, and the Labour Party one (each branch of the Labour Party alternating in making the selection). It was impossible for the Government to appoint amongst their eight Members any Member who was not a supporter of the Bill. They looked to the other parties to supply opponents. No attempt would be made to rush the action of the Committee or its Report, and the House would have due time for consideration of the Report of the Committee.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) rose to a point of order. As he understood it, there was to be a short speech on each side on each question which was put from the chair, and as there were fifteen Members it was obvious that there might be several short speeches upon all the Members of which the Committee was to be composed. He would ask whether that was not the fact, and he wished to know from the Government whether it was usual or convenient that a controversy of this kind should be started on an allotted day and whether it ought not to be taken on a day when Government business was put down.

*MR. SPEAKER: This Motion comes within the ordinary so-called Ten Minutes Rule. The right hon. Gentleman is quite right in thinking that if opposition is raised to the name of each hon. Member a short discussion can take place in regard to the name of each Member. It is also open to me to put the Question that the debate should be adjourned, as the rule says that the Speaker, after admitting a brief explanatory statement from the Member who moves and the Member who opposes such a Motion, may without further Amendment put the Motion on the Motion that the debate be adjourned.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) inquired whether it was not the ordinary course that if a name was objected to the debate should be confined to the substitution of another name.

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not think that that is so. It is really almost necessary to enter into a general statement to explain the position of the Member named, because possibly no objection will be taken to the individual, but only to him as representing a particular section of opinion.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) hoped they would not be taken to have pledged themselves to the particular manner in which the name of the Labour Member of the Committee was decided upon. If they were they would vote against him; therefore he hoped they were not pledging themselves to the particular method of selection.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY said that the point the hon. Member took was exactly what he had indicated to the House. The Motion had been down on the Paper for three days, and he put it down three times in order that there should be opportunity for considering opposition to the Committee. He did not see any reason why the appointment of the Committee should be any longer delayed.

MR. HAROLD COX said he was satisfied with the assurances of the hon. Member.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Hugh Barrie, Mr. Arthur Dewar, Mr. Findlay, Mr. John Henderson, Mr. McKillop, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, Mr. O'Hare, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Dundas White, Mr. Wood, and Mr. Younger nominated other Members of the Select Committee.

Ordered, "That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records."

Ordered, "That five be the quorum."—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Mr. T. W. Russell.

SUPPLY [7TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

CLASS III.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £124,215, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Irish Land Commission."

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) moved to reduce the Vote by £100, so that an opportunity might be given for discussion of that particular Vote, which was most vital to the welfare of the people and the future of the country. He wished to repeat a protest he had made in previous sessions against the system which governed the discussion of Supply, and especially Irish Supply. On the question of Irish taxation, the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day stated that although the general taxation of Ireland had increased by £2,000,000 or £3,000,000, yet the Imperial contribution had not increased. That was to say that the whole of the additional taxation had been caused by an increase in the cost of the government of Ireland. One of their most serious complaints was that the government of Ireland was increasingly costly and was an extravagant as well as an inefficient government. Notwithstanding that great and increasing cost no opportunity was given of criticising the items of the expenditure or endeavouring to curtail the extravagance. Under the Rules of Supply three days were graciously vouchsafed to Ireland for the discussion of the entire cost of Irish government. Three days only were given to discuss an expenditure of £8,000,000, and to discuss the proceedings of some forty-five public boards, as to whose proceedings this Committee was in absolute and blank ignorance. The representatives of the Irish people who had to pay this money were not given any opportunity of discussing the system of government, because, of course, hon. Members would see that three days for the discussion of all these various boards was practically no opportunity at all. If the whole of the twenty-three days allocated for the discussion of Supply generally were given for the examination of the proceedings of these various Irish boards and for the discussion of the daily increasing cost of the government, it would not be too long a period. The present system meant, therefore, that no opportunity was given them of investigating how the money was spent and of exposing to the House of Commons the monstrous extravagance of every single Department in the government of the country. So far as Supply was concerned, the House of Commons might as well not exist at all. Every year at the end of the session all the Irish money—such of it, at any rate, as had not been voted—was voted in the course of a few minutes without any discussion at all, and the most they could hope for was that in the course of one session they would be able to discuss two or three subjects of Irish expenditure. On this occasion they had selected for discussion the Land Commission Vote, because in their judgment it more vitally concerned the welfare of the people and the future of the country than any other department of Irish government. The Irish Land Commission was engaged at present in the task of endeavouring to settle the Irish land question. All parties in the State were in absolute agreement that there never could be peace and prosperity in Ireland until that question was settled, and all parties were also agreed that this must be carried out by the purchase by the tenants of their holdings on fair and equitable terms. The carrying out of this on a sound and equitable basis by the Land Commission concerned the welfare and the future of every man, woman, and child in Ireland, and ought to concern all in that Committee and every Statesman who looked forward to a future of peace and prosperity in Ireland. The Irish Land Commission was engaged in rent fixing and land purchase. These two operations were indissolubly connected. Rents were the basis of purchase. If unfair rents were fixed either maliciously or ignorantly by the agents, that reacted on purchase. If the rent fixing was wrong, then inevitably the land purchase would be wrong. The whole of the rent-fixing machinery of the Land Commission had been manned and run for the last twenty years by the Tory Party in the landlord interest. He said that that was true of the officers of the Land Commission from top to bottom Those at the head of the Land Commission had more to do with giving the tone to the actions of all the officers of the Commission right through than anybody else; and if those at the head were partisans, say, of the landlord interest, that would be felt down through every ramification of the machine. In his judgment, and in the judgment of his colleagues, the whole staff from top to bottom, with the exception of the recently-appointed Estates Commissioners, was a packed staff that had been put in, within the last twenty years, by Tory Governments in the interests of the landlord class. Most of the appointments to the Land Commission were, he believed, ordinary permanent Civil Service appointments, and so far, no doubt, the hands of the Chief Secretary were tied, but that right hon. Gentleman could still do something by rearrangement of offices, by judicious promotion, and by other such means to improve the permanent staff of the Land Commission and to increase enormously the confidence of the people in its impartiality and justice. Besides the permanent staff there was a staff of temporary officers who were in no sense Civil Service officers. These officers were appointed originally for temporary purposes and were reappointed from time to time. His criticism of the staff generally was more particularly true of these men, who were put into their positions by the Tory Government unblushingly in the interests of the landlords. When he gave the names and qualifications of these men the Committee would be driven to the conclusion that he was strictly accurate in his statement. They were for the most part broken down landlords, aged land agents, retired military officers, and political hangers-on generally of the Tory Party. Was it not a monstrous thing, when so much depended upon the proper working of the Land Acts in Ireland, that persons of that sort should have been put into the Commission, and that a great English Party should have packed the tribunal in the way it had? Here was a field open to the Chief Secretary for immediate reform. A number of these persons had arrived at the end of their term of office—in the case of twenty-seven their period of engagement would have terminated at the end of March. Representations were made to the Chief Secretary almost immediately he took office as to the way some of these men had been acting, how that, notwithstanding the fall in the value of produce, these men had been for some months past actually raising rents—that there was good reason to believe that, ever since the Land Act of 1903 was passed, there had been a conspiracy on the part of certain people in Ireland, aided and abetted by these agents of the landlords in the Land Commission, to keep down second-term reductions in order to keep up the price of land. Moreover, they impressed upon the Chief Secretary by every means in their power that the great majority of these twenty-seven men were distrusted by the Irish people and that they had no proper qualification for their positions. They had therefore impressed upon the Chief Secretary the desirability of refusing to renew these appointments, urging him to fill up the vacancies thus created by men whose impartiality was proved to his satisfaction. In the King's Speech at the opening of Parliament there was a pledge that Ireland in matters of administration was to be governed in accordance with Irish ideas. That pledge had led the Irish Party to believe that in matters of this kind, which so vitally affected the prosperity of the country, the right hon. Gentleman would adopt the suggestions made to him by Irish representatives. On the contrary, however, he had rejected their views and advice. With the exception of five, he had reappointed all those Commissioners who had been the mere tools and agents of the landlord party, and a large proportion of whom were notoriously distrusted by the people and had no qualification for their positions. By refusing to reappoint the five he had incurred just as much opposition from the landlord class as if he had gone the whole way and refused to reappoint any at all. He had dissatisfied the people and profoundly stirred the souls of the Ulster Members of Parliament. The reappointment of these men was a very serious matter in regard to the working of the Land Act, and as showing the attitude of some of the right hon. Gentleman's advisers in Ireland. He could assure the Chief Secretary that the confidence of the Irish people in him and his Government would not stand many more shocks of that character. As regarded the general administration of the Land Commission he might say that they were, as was usual upon these occasions, in a very difficult position. They were under the disadvantage that when they had been able to seize on an opportunity of bringing forward a matter of this kind they were without the necessary facts and figures to enable them to discuss the matter intelligibly. It was more than twelve months since they had had a Report from the Estates Commissioners, and they did not know, except in the most fragmentary way by means of Questions across the floor of the House, what the figures were for the past twelve months, what these Commissioners had been doing, or what they had achieved. When the Land Act of 1903 was passing through Parliament they extracted from the right hon. Member for Dover a promise that periodical Reports should be published by the Estates Commissioners. That promise had not been kept from that day to this, and it was a serious scandal that when the Irish Party desired to raise a discussion upon the administration of this great Department, they were handicapped by the fact that they had not the necessary information before them. No facts, figures, or other information on the subject had been provided for the last twelve months.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Reports are made up to the 31st of March in each year, and the Estates Commissioners are now engaged on their Report. They could not have it ready before the 31st of March, but they will present it to the House as early as possible.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said that did not satisfy him. A pledge was given to the Irish Party by the right hon. Member for Dover, and the pledge was replaced after the right hon. Gentleman left office by a pledge given by the Estates Commissioners themselves that they would issue periodical Reports. They should have had within the twelve months at least two Reports, and perhaps more. The Land Commission issued Reports with regard to the fixing of rent periodically throughout the year, and to-day he was unable intelligently to discuss what had been going on in the last twelve months in the Estates Commissioners Department because his knowledge was only picked up casually. That was a serious scandal. He knew that the office in question had not had a sufficient staff, but it was the old question of the Treasury again. For the sake of saving the cost he supposed they refused to give the Commissioners additional assistance to enable them to prepare the Report, and the result was that the Commons had to discuss the matter without any information less than twelve months old. The Land Commission, he knew, had been hampered very seriously in endeavouring to carry out the Land Act of 1903 by the instructions and regulations under which they were forced to act for a considerable time. It would be remembered that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover issued no formal regulations for publication, but he did issue a number of regulations and instructions from time to time to the Commissioners, and when they called for the production of those documents (the Act having provided that regulations should be published) they were met with the statement that they were not really regulations at all; they were only letters and therefore could not be produced. It was unfair to denounce the regulations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin, which were published and then withdrawn, because the real responsibility rested on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, who, having passed the Land Act, proceeded immediately by secret instructions and regulations to hamper and thwart its proper working. He now asked the Chief Secretary to set that question at rest in justice to everybody by producing and publishing the letters containing those instructions. The Estates Commissioners had them ready. They did not publish them because they had been forbidden to do so. Anyway, the regulations secret and public had all gone, and he congratulated the Chief Secretary most heartily on his action in tearing them up as soon as he got into office. Those regulations had prevented the effective working of the evicted tenants' clauses of the Land Act, and other clauses with reference to untenanted land, and so forth. And now the Commissioners had been working with perfect freedom of action in those matters, and with a sympathetic Government in office for four months, what had been the result? They were told th 100 evicted tenants had been restored to their holdings or to other holdings provided for them. It was possible for the Commissioners under the Act as it stood now, in a comparatively small number of months, practically to settle certainly seven-eighths of the whole evicted tenants' question. He wanted to know why had that not been done? The Chief Secretary had done his part, but the reason these clauses were not working was that for four months the Treasury had been haggling with the Irish Government over the appointment of five or six additional inspectors asked for by the Estates Commissioners to enable them to carry out that portion of the Act. The Chief Secretary had said the other day that now they were going to be appointed. He was glad to hear it, and he would be glad to know definitely if the appointments had been made.

Mr. BRYCE replied that they had been appointed.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I suppose it was the day before yesterday.

Mr. BRYCE: Yes. Let justice be done to the Treasury. The Treasury had consented to the appointments before the day before yesterday.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said he did not imagine for a single instant that anything he said in the House would have such an effect. At the same time he did congratulate himself upon the coincidence that after this attack had been made on the Treasury, and after the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made a sympathetic reply, these men were immediately appointed. Anyhow, he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman upon their appointment. But what he complained of was that the whole operation of these portions of the Land Act were hung up by a hostile Treasury for four months after a friendly Government got into office. That was a lesson with reference to Irish affairs. The Treasury had played the same part with regard to Irish affairs all through. It was just the same when the Act first came into operation. Here was a body created to effect a great national settlement of the land war in Ireland with £112,000,000 of money provided for the operation, and yet, forsooth, the English Treasury heckled and fought with them for months before they would give them an office to sit in or clerks to carry out the work. The delay in carrying out this portion of the Act up to the present had been entirely due to the same cause, and he urged the right hon. Gentleman, now that these additional inspectors had been granted by the Treasury, to see that this portion of the Act was put rapidly in operation. There was no portion of the Irish land question so vital. It was the promise of a settlement of the evicted tenants' question that made the passage of the Land Act of 1903 possible. No man on the Nationalist Benches would have agreed to that Act except on the distinct understanding that the evicted tenants' question was going to be settled. Three years had passed since then, and these poor creatures were still out on the road side, some dying through hope deferred. This had gone on for four months after a friendly Government had come into office. He did hope that the right hon. Gentleman would now insist that this portion of the Act should be worked rapidly, and if he did he felt certain that in a few months the greater portion of the evicted tenants' question could be settled. He did not say it could be completely settled. It could not be settled without amending legislation dealing with grazing land and so forth. But an enormous amount of good could be done by a sympathetic and energetic administration unhampered by the action of the Treasury or anybody else, and he did appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to make up for the culpable delay of the last four months by pushing on this work in the immediate future. He was not able to discuss the Department with proper knowledge because they were without information. He moved this Motion in order to initiate a discussion in the hope that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give them information, also as a protest against the action of the right hon. Gentleman in the reappointment of these temporary Sub-Commissioners, and in the hope that the discussion that had taken place and the dissatisfaction that had been expressed on the matter might lead him to take more seriously on other matters the well ascertained and clearly expressed views of the majority of the people of Ireland, in sympathy with whose views he was pledged to govern the country. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £124,115, be granted for the said Service."—*Mr. John Redmond.*

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.) said he desired to supplement the remarks of his hon. friend in reference to one particular phase of the land question, namely, the question of purchase as affected by the untenanted land. The part of Ireland which he represented was intensely interested in the action of the Government in respect of the restitution of such land, and whilst it was true to say that it would have been impossible to have passed the Land Act of 1903 if it had not involved the possibility of a settlement of the evicted tenants question, it was equally true to say that it would have been utterly impossible for the Government to face Parliament with the Bill unless they were ready to promise a settlement of the questions of congestion and depopulation which existed side by side in the West of Ireland. Previous to the passage of the Act of 1903 there had been a fierce agitation in the West of Ireland because of the separation of the people from the land, and the aid of coercion was invoked in order to suppress it. Over and over again agitation had been accompanied by coercion, and coercion had been immediately followed by legislation to remove the grievance which gave rise to the agitation. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover when Chief Secretary was warned from the Irish Benches that he could not accomplish the reforms which he described as being so necessary unless the clauses of the Act in regard to untenanted land in the congested districts were made compulsory. Time had justified the prophecy that was made. Only the mere fringe of the question had been touched in the West of Ireland. The little that had been done was accomplished, not by the Estates Commissioners, but by the Congested Districts Board, and considering the extent of the work still to be done, it was true to say that if the action of both bodies was to be continued at the rate of progress made during the last two-and-a-half years it would take at least two or three generations before the question was settled. In the part of the country he represented the land was in the hands of a very few people, and the inhabitants were huddled together upon bogs and marshes. Ninety per cent. of the people occupied holdings under £12 valuation, and at least two-thirds of the land, which meant all the good land, was in the possession of 3 per cent. of the agricultural population. Most of this land was untenanted, unprofitable, and uncultivated. Those who were experienced in the question knew that the feeding capacity of good land, even in the best counties of Ireland, was not nearly so great as it was ten, twenty, or thirty years ago, because of the absence of cultivation. Were they going to have cultivation by allowing a thousand or five thousand acres to remain in the hands of an absentee grazier, who often let his land go to waste? That was not the way in which the country would be regenerated, and it was admitted by the late Government, and no doubt it would be equally admitted by the present Government At least they had the right to expect a declaration from the Chief Secretary, who was responsible for the administration of the country, as to the future policy of the Government, of the Estates Commissioners, and of all the bodies connected with the administration of the land laws of Ireland. Unless they got such a declaration and unless it was followed up by performance, the consequences to the country would be very serious. In the first place the people were still fleeing from the land, the hopes which arose in their breasts by the promises made by Ministers in 1903 not having been fulfilled by the performances. The people now were beginning to despair, and the Chief Secretary knew what had been the consequence of former periods of despair among the Irish people. He warned the right hon. Gentleman that unless his declaration was satisfactory on this question of untenanted land—the distribution of these ranches, the bringing together of the people who worked the land and the land itself—and unless that declaration was immediately followed up by prompt and energetic action, there must spring up in a very few months in Ireland, in the West, at least, an agitation which would very quickly set the machinery of land purchase in motion, and once again teach the people of Ireland that it was really upon themselves that they must rely, and that if they showed themselves quiet the Government became negligent of their desires. That was the lesson that had been taught the Irish people, but the lesson had come, not from the Irish Benches, but from the Treasury Bench. They had reason to hope a few months ago, and they still clung to the hope that with the present Government in office the lesson would be reversed, and that the people of Ireland might really feel there was some attention paid to the representations made on their behalf. But the people were losing heart, and it would require a great change to bring them back to the state of feeling which existed two years ago. With reference to the action of the Estates Commissioners, there was a case in his own constituency where the Commissioners bought a small estate that was owned by the Rev. Mr. Birmingham, a rector of the Protestant Church, in county Meath, but the Commissioners left ninety-five acres in the hands of the owner. In other words they had resold ninety-five acres with the use of public money to the non-residential landlord. In reply to his question the Chief Secretary informed him that the reason the rev. gentleman was left those ninety-five acres was that the land surrounded a residence. He had known the place from his childhood, and he was rather taken aback when he heard that there was a residence. But he did not like to contradict the right hon. Gentleman in the House, without making a little inquiry. He was on the estate a fortnight ago, and he found as he expected that the residence of which the right hon. Gentleman spoke—on information of course supplied to him by officials—was an ordinary herd's house. and had always been a herd's house, and had the character and appearance of one. There was a curious circumstance connected with that estate. An inspector came down before, he believed, the price was fixed, and with the landlord he visited the tenants, who believed that the estate had been purchased by the Estates Commissioners, and that this gentleman was selling it to them, certain amounts having been named; but as a matter of fact he was there with the landlord trying to make the price high. The estate had since been sold at a very much less price than that which they tried to induce the tenants to pay. That was the way the price of land was forced up. It had been since sold at a less price, but the strange thing was that four of the small tenants to whom allotments of land were given in the first instance and who had been induced to sign an agreement for certain allotments which were pointed out to them, and for which the annuity was fixed, now found that the land had been given to others, some of whom did not live on the estate. The reason assigned for this was that they were not persons suitable for the working of the land. He did not know why they were not suitable. One of them, Charles Brennan, was a man who had about one and a half acres of land on this estate, and for thirty years or more he had been earning the entire livelihood of himself and family on the land. It might reasonably have been expected that he was a person suitable to work four, five, or six acres more. The reason given in regard to another was that he was a tradesman. His trade was that of a nailer—a trade out of which thirty or forty years ago a man could make a living, but which had been destroyed by machinery and cheaper methods of production. This man who was no longer a tradesman had to make his living out of a small patch of land. The additional patch promised had not been given to him, and ninety-five acres of the best of the land had been acquired by the non-residential landlord by the use of public money. He would ask the Chief Secretary to make particular inquiry with regard to that estate. He had failed to get information from the Commissioners although he wrote to them on the matter, as he would have preferred to deal with it in that way instead of bringing it up in Parliament. After all, the Irish representatives were shown on every hand that the only possible chance of getting redress was to bring matters up in this House. He asked the Chief Secretary to pay particular attention to the questions of congestion and depopulation, for the two were side by side in the West of Ireland, and also to get the Congested Districts Board and the Estates Commissioners to administer the clauses of the Act dealing with these questions in a broader and more vigilant spirit than had hitherto characterised their action. In some districts large quantities of land had been acquired either by the Estates Commissioners or the Congested Districts Board or both; in some cases it had been in their hands for a year or two years. He understood that the reason for not distributing the land was that the Commissioners or the Board were anxious to acquire a great deal more land in order to have a wide and general scheme of distribution. He would approve of that idea if he saw any indication on the part of these bodies that they would quickly acquire land. There was no indication on the part of the Government that they intended to bring forward, as he thought they must do in the end, a compulsory measure dealing with untenanted land in the congested districts. There being no such indication he thought it was indefensible for these bodies to hold up 1,000 or 2,000 acres as they were doing in some districts instead of dividing it among the small occupiers. This was a pressing matter to which he invited the right hon. Gentleman's attention. With regard to rent-fixing, great complaints were made all over the country as to the manner in which the Chief Commissioners and the Sub-Commissioners were discharging their duties. Ever since the passing of the Act of 1903 they had been fixing rents on a higher standard than existed before, and that side by side with the fact that agriculture was more depressed now than in 1903. That depression continued, and the prospect was far from bright. A tenant some time ago showed him the schedule in which the rent at which his holding was fixed was set forth. Under one head Sub-Commissioner McElligot stated that it was extremely difficult to fix the rent because of the exceptionally good treatment which the tenant had given to the land. Then he proceeded to fix a very high rent, and because the land was within the boundaries of a country town he put 33⅓ per cent. additional rent upon it for "proximity," but he did not take into account the fact that because it was so closely situated to the town the sum of 10s. was levied for the local water and sanitary rate. Mr. McElligot was one of the twenty-two gentlemen in whom the Chief Secretary had recently expressed renewed confidence. He wished to impress on the Chief Secretary and those charged with the administration of the laws in Ireland the absolute necessity and urgency of dealing quickly with the questions of congestion and the redistribution of the untenanted lands in the West of Ireland in order to save the people and the Government themselves from consequences that might be serious. He said "redistribution" because this land about a couple of generations ago belonged to the predecessors of the very people who were driven from it at a time when the production of cattle seemed to pay a little better than allowing men to increase and multiply there. He wanted more than an expression of sympathy from the right hon. Gentleman. He asked for a declaration of the policy which the Government was going to pursue in this matter in the future. Unless the right hon. Gentleman was in a position not only to make a declaration of his own good will, but to tell them that the various bodies connected with the administration of the land purchase laws in Ireland were prepared quickly to administer those laws, and to carry out in a sympathetic spirit the promises which no doubt would be made, there were serious times before them in Ireland in the near future.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said that before the House broke up for the Easter holidays he made a statement which was resented here, and which had been resented in certain quarters in Ireland. He stated then what he believed, and what thousands of the Irish people believed, that for some time past there had been a deliberate conspiracy in Ireland to raise rents with the avowed object of increasing the purchase price of land. He was not then able to give any specific evidence, but he proposed now to submit some evidence to bear out what he admitted was a very serious statement to make, especially in the House of Commons. He had with him the annual report of the Irish Land Commission up to March 31st, 1905, and he was in the same position as the hon. Member for Waterford when he complained that in regard to purchase he was unable to deal with recent facts and figures. His (Mr. Russell's) information on the question of fair rents was fourteen months old. That was not his fault. It was the fault of the arrangements. Taking the report as it stood let them see what was taking place in the matter of rents. The total reduction in first term rents in that year was 14·8 per cent., and the reduction in the same class of rents during the preceding twenty-three years of the Land Act was 21·2. There was a difference of more than six per cent. With regard to second term rents, the total reduction for the year ending 1905 was 15·8 per cent., and during the preceding period the reduction was 20·9 per cent. During the year ending March, 1905, the Chief Commission raised rents in twenty-four counties in Ireland and reduced them in eight. For the same period the Chief Commission in first term rents increased sub-commission rents in seventeen counties and reduced rents in nine. With figures such as these it was impossible to avoid the conclusion that something had occurred to influence the Land Commission in dealing with these matters. He asked any member of the Committee, who had any knowledge of Ireland, whether there had been anything in the condition of Irish agriculture to warrant that increase in rents? Was there a man in the Committee—he did not care where he sat, but he should stipulate that he should know something of the facts of Irish agriculture—who did not know that for months past Irish farmers had been driving home their cattle from the fairs because they were unsaleable? He knew that had occurred in his own constituency, and if these poor people could not sell their cattle how could they pay their rent. In face of the position of Irish agriculture and of the fall in the price of almost every article of produce, and especially the fall in the price of cattle, proceedings such as these were totally unjustifiable, and people had a right to conclude that there was this conspiracy in existence, the object of which was not so much to raise rents as to increase the price of land for the purpose of sale. Dealing with the question of appeal, he said the appeal in the matter of fair rents under the Act of 1903 must be held before one judicial commissioner. It was true the Lord-Lieutenant might appoint an additional judicial commissioner, but under the Act the appeal must be held before Mr. Justice Meredith or Mr. Commissioner Fitzgerald. He did not know, by the way, why the latter gentleman was called a Judge, because he had no claim to that title. These two gentlemen, however, had the right to appoint ten assessors who, according to the Act, must be men of skill and experience in agriculture; and the point he wished to bring out was that these appointments must be approved by the Lord-Lieutenant, which meant the Chief Secretary. Ten of these gentlemen had been appointed, and although a very large number of fair rent appeals were heard in the province of Ulster, out of the ten gentlemen who had been appointed as assessors to sit on fair rent appeals only one was an Ulster farmer. The rest were from other provinces, and most of them were graziers. The point he wished to urge upon the Chief Secretary was this. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that a grazier from county Louth, who knew nothing about Ulster farming, was competent to judge in such a matter? He was not seeking to cast any blame upon the present Chief Secretary, because he had been in office only four months; but the time would come when the right hon. Gentleman and the Lord-Lieutenant would be responsible. He could not appeal to the Front Opposition Bench, however, and so he was bound to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, and his point was, as he had said, Did the right hon. Gentleman think that the appointment of a grazier from Louth, or a large grass farmer from Tipperary, fulfilled the terms of the appointment laid down by the Act itself, which required that an assessor should be skilled in agriculture? This sort of people did not know anything about farming in Ulster, which was quite different from farming in Louth or Tipperary. He held that the strict terms of the language of the Act had not been complied with. There was not only the difference in the farming, but there was an important point which had told most unfavourably against these Ulster farmers—there was a difference in the law. What did Mr. Callan, an assessor who came from county Louth, or Mr. Williams, who was a farmer under the Duke of Devonshire and an Englishman brought over a few years ago, know about the Ulster custom? He should be delighted to have Mr. Callan or Mr. Williams upstairs and to cross-examine them about it. Under the Act of 1870, which governed the whole of the land code of Ireland, the presumption was that the improvements on a holding belonged to the tenant. That was stated in plain terms, but under the Ulster custom the right of the tenant to the improvements was much clearer. The Land Commission, with the exception of one Commissioner, Mr. Commissioner Bailey, who had gone, made the tenant prove the improvements which were made by himself or his predecessor on title, and everything that the tenant could not prove went to the landlord without proof, although the Act of Parliament said the presumption was in favour of the tenant. Therefore, the Ulster men did not get their improvements, which they were entitled to, both according to law and custom. The hon. Gentleman proceeded to quote cases, especially from Monaghan, to establish his proposition. He said that in that county the figures showed that, since the Purchase Act of 1903, rents had been raised by even sums of £1 and 10s. all round.

He had it not in his heart to blame the Chief Secretary. He was comparatively new to the work, and had been dealing with the English people in the past. He told them there was an appeal. But to whom? Then they were told it was a judicial proceeding. What were the facts? A man got a reduction of rent, say in 1902, and paid the reduced rent up to 1906. Then—four years afterwards—the appeal was heard, the rent was raised, and the difference between the two rents had to be made up at the next galeday. The only intimation the suitor got was a halfpenny postcard announcing that the rent had been raised. Was that a judicial proceeding? In one of the Divisions of Monaghan a large number of rents had been raised, but in the other Division rents fixed by the same Sub-Commissioners were left alone. Those that were altered were raised by the automatic proceeding of putting on a £1 here and 10s. there. He heard the evidence in 1894 before the Morley Committee and he had not the slightest hesitation in saying that there was not a bit of judicial procedure about it. It was simply rule of thumb. They did not want to raise every rent, and so they put on £1 here and 10s. there. What did the appeal system cost? He knew the hon. Member for East Mayo was in a position to deal roughly with him on that point. In 1894 the appeal system would have been wrecked in the Morley Committee but for his vote. He made confession publicly of the fact. He felt then that it was a very serious matter, when they were dealing with a man's property, not to have an appeal. As the result of all this work and expense to landlord and tenant, during the whole existence of the Land Act rents had been raised 2 per cent. Was the game worth the candle? Two per cent. was neither here nor there for the landlord, and it was not much to the tenant, in comparison with the irritation, worry, and trouble which it caused. The tenants were brought ten or fifteen miles from their homes to the appeal court, and the difference in rent was consumed over and over again. The expenses to the landlord also ran away with any gain he might make. He knew the Chief Secretary had it not in his power to alter this system by a stroke of the pen; but surely there ought to be some way of ending a system which produced not more than 2 per cent. of increase, at enormous cost to the landlord and worry and annoyance to the tenant. There were 12,000 appeals now pending, and no real impression had been made on them. The landlords appealed in almost every case, and he asked the Chief Secretary to take into his serious consideration the whole question of appeal. Coming to the question of purchase, the Land Act had been in operation two and a half years. Perhaps before he dealt with that he ought to call attention to the condition of the Front Opposition Bench. The late Government was responsible for this Act and the conduct of it, and neither the right hon. Member for South Dublin nor the right hon. Member for Dover was in his place.

Mr. BRYCE said he was very sorry to say that the right hon. Member for South Dublin was unable to be present through ill health.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said there was no doubt good reason for the absence of both right hon. Gentlemen, but it was extremely awkward to have to speak of them in their absence. The Land Purchase Act had been in operation two and a half years. Land to the value of £40,000,000 sterling had been sold and the agreements signed. That was in a sense satisfactory, but in one sense it was most unsatisfactory. How far had they got? How much money had been distributed? What was the inducement to give up inspection? It was a great thing to give up inspection and possibly by-and-bye it would be found to have been a great error. They gave up inspection and consented to the zone system for one reason and one reason alone. The right hon. Member for Dover said that all such cases would be rapidly dealt with. It was for that reason they gave up inspection and accepted the zone system. The result had been that while the Government had secured a high price for the land under the zones, the people had not had the rapid dealing promised, and the British taxpayer had lost the security which existed in the inspection. Now what blocked the way? Some people spoke of the want of money, but this contention was now out of court. They could not get rid of the money they had got. They had been under a delusion for some time; the scheme was not blocked for want of money at all. First of all there was the fresh start; one did not get into harness all at once. Then there was the inevitable muddle which followed a fresh start. Then there was the want of staff and office accommodation. They knew perfectly well that the department had to fight for sanitary provision and sanitary offices, and there were times when, if a sanitary officer had been sent in, he would have cleared out the whole place. That was the fault of the Treasury. Then there was the want of staff, inspectors, and clerks—that was the Treasury again. Did hon. Members think that the Treasury went into court for the purposes of promoting the working of the Act? Not a bit of it. They went in for the purpose of obstructing it and to prevent the untenanted land from being divided among the people. He cheerfully admitted that they had not now to fight the right hon. Member for Trinity College. He was out of it; nor had they to fight the members of the late Government. But all that was not sufficient to account for the delay and the block that was caused. There was no difficulty in the actual work of the Estates Commissioners. Their work was far forward. They had got or were getting settled by degrees all the legal difficulties that were bound to arise under a complicated Act. But they had got them settled, and it was when the case left them that the real trouble and the real delay began. It was the old old story. Everyone who knew anything about Ireland knew that when an Act was passed the moment it crossed over to Ireland a body of men would begin to obstruct it. This great Act was passed for a great and noble purpose, but was it being worked in the spirit in which it was passed? The Estates Commissioners had done everything in their power, but their efforts had been blocked at every stage. The real difficulty arose the moment a case left the Estates Commissioners and got into the Department of Title. There was something like a dozen examiners of title. They were gentlemen belonging to the Bar, and they were appointed at sums varying between £600 and £800 a year. Of course these officials were in no hurry; why should they be? They were not permanent officers, and the sooner their work was done the sooner they would go back to the Bar. That was where the real trouble began. They were now bringing into the new department all the old machinery of the Landed Estates Court; but it was in the Department of Title that the real difficulty arose, and unless something was done there it would be impossible for the Act to work. When a case was ready and had passed through the hands of the Estates Commissioners, and had even got through the hands of the Examiners of Title, what happened? Under the Act itself Mr. Justice Meredith must distribute the money, that having to be done by the Judicial Commissioner. The neck of the bottle was blocked because no case could be settled until Mr. Justice Meredith had passed it, and he could not get through the work. Personally he should welcome the transfer of Mr. Commissioner Fitzgerald to this work, because he could do no harm there, or, at any rate, he could not do as much harm as he was now doing. There was no reason why there should not be an additional Commissioner for facilitating the last stage of these proceedings. The block was not due to want of money: they had not spent the money they had got. It was contemplated when the Act was passed that £5,000,000 a year would be spent; but in the three years which had elapsed all they had had was £12,000,000, and they had not been able to get rid of all that. Surely there was some possibility of the Government's asserting itself over these officials. If they were once given to understand that the Government meant business, and that they would not be kept on unless they got through their work, then the work would be done. He wished to know if the Chief Secretary intended to look into the matter with a view to getting rid of those things that were blocking the way. The Land Purchase Act was the one thing that gave hope to Ireland, and he hoped the officials would not be allowed to thwart the work. He now wished to ask for some information about a gentleman who was appointed in 1888 or 1889 to the office of Assistant

Land Commissioner at a salary of £800 a year. Early in the 90's he was appointed to a sub-department for reporting on the prices at fairs, and his salary raised to £1,000. Upon one occasion he asked one of the Sub-Commissioners whether they appreciated this Department and he said they never looked at the prices. In 1897 when the Agricultural Department was formed, this gentleman was transferred. It appeared, however, that Sir Horace Plunkett, who was at the head of the Department, had no use for this official, and if Sir Horace had no use for a man then he was hopeless. Consequently, he was transferred to the Congested Districts Board, and even they had no use for him, and he was sent back to the Agricultural Department. He wanted to know where this man was now. He had been through the whole of the Irish Estimates to find his salary, but had failed to discover it. He was told that the Department gave a grant to the Agricultural Organisation Society of £2,000, and the last he had heard of his old friend was that he had a salary of £1,000 to superintend the expenditure of this £2,000. If the Government wanted retrenchment, here was an opportunity. What he wanted to know was where was this man placed? [AN HON. MEMBER: Who is he?] The name was "Porter." Was he still a Sub-Commissioner? There were fifty-seven Assistant Commissioners chargeable on these Votes, and he wanted to know if his old friend was still doing this work. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford and he had both made their views pretty clear before the adjournment for the Easter holidays upon the question of recent appointments. He had never made any secret of the fact that he had appealed to the Chief Secretary to deal with the matter. He had told the right hon. Gentleman that he considered it a great national question, that these rents were intolerable rents, and that to appoint twenty-seven temporary officers of this kind was not a proper thing to do. It was a curious coincidence that most of the permanent men had been put upon the Land Purchase Department, and that the temporary men, who were open to influence, had been put on the Rent Fixing Department. These men ought not to be let loose on Ireland. The Government were bound to appoint the best twenty-seven men they could find in the country for this work. They should have carefully examined the credentials of candidates for the appointments, taken into consideration who recommended them for office, and, in fact, found out all about them. He did not say that the whole of these men should be removed. He and his friends had been denounced in Irish Tory circles for what they had done in this matter. He was, however, prepared to stand by it. He would tell the Chief Secretary at once that he might as well have been hung for a sheep as for a lamb. The Unionist Members had given him just as much trouble for the refusal to reappoint five as they would have done for refusing to reappoint fifteen. There was one principle dear to the Unionist Party, but there was another almost equally dear. It was that everything with a salary attached to it must not get out of the Unionist Party. The longer the Chief Secretary remained in his office the clearer he would realise that truth. But all the Liberal Governments that he had known to be in office were never in power. The Castle and the Tories always managed things for them, and they would endeavour to do it now. One of the Ulster Members put a Question the other day about a twopenny-halfpenny appointment of a builder in Belfast, and they were up in arms about that going out of their ranks. He hoped the Government would realise that there was no use in trying to satisfy those gentlemen unless they gave them everything. Let the Government give them what they liked, however, but let them not hand over the land question to them. Did those gentlemen honestly approve of appointing to fix rents some of the men of the kind that were now at work? At any rate the constituencies did not approve of it. They had been worrying his life out in regard to those appointments.

MR. LONSDALE: Not from my constituency.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Oh, yes, from yours. He urged that any body who knew those men was aware that they were mere creatures, and the Commiteee would find the rents were very different during 1906 from what they were during 1905. But both the fair rent department and the question of purchase ought to receive the immediate attention of the Chief Secretary himself, who ought to let the officials know that they would not in the future be allowed to obstruct the Purchase Act as they had been obstructing it in the past. The Treasury, at all events, he was glad to think, was not going to oppose the Estates Commissioners dealing with the evicted tenants as they did before.

*MR. WYNDHAM (Dover) said he had not intended to intervene in this debate, but as the period had been alluded to during which he was Chief Secretary, perhaps he might, on that account, be allowed to say a few words. All he desired was to make his position clear. He wished to dissociate himself from the latter part of the speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. He thought a great mistake had been made by those hon. Members who had attacked the gentlemen who were discharging the difficult duty of fixing rents in Ireland. It was true that technically their appointments were temporary, and that dated from the time of Mr. Gladstone's first Land Act. At that time it was supposed that, after certain rents had been fixed and a standard arr ved at, rents would be fixed by agreement, and that, therefore, permanent appointments would not be necessary. Since that time the Treasury had always been looking forward to a millennium in which Irish landlords and tenants would be able to agree about rents without going to law. In 1903, when they were debating the Land Purchase Act, not only the Treasury, but many persons from Ireland, believed that if that Act was a success the necessity for fixing rents on a large scale would disappear. If the presence of those gentlemen in a temporary capacity was a peril to the Land Purchase Act, then was the time to have said so, and not now, and since they had been discharging almost judicial functions, he deprecated most earnestly the practice of trying to bring pressure to bear upon them by debating their decisions night after night in Parliament. As Mr. Porter had been alluded to, he thought it only right to say that he had always found him to be a zealous and competent official under the Congested Districts Board. He thought it was only right that he should state what he knew in regard to the services which Mr. Porter had rendered.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Where is he now?

*MR. WYNDHAM said the hon. Member would see that it was not his duty to answer that Question. When he had the opportunity of judging of Mr. Porter's work he found it good. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had stated that the last stage of land purchase, namely, the distribution of money, was the stage which ultimately set the pace of land purchase in Ireland, and with that contention he agreed. He wished, however, to correct one misapprehension. When he introduced the Land Bill he said that they did not expect to proceed at a greater pace than £5,000,000 worth of purchase in any one of the first three years. At that time he was anxious to give full assurance to the Treasury to get the best terms, and he arrived at that estimate of the maximum pace at which it would proceed during the first three years largely because he knew that it would be very difficult to expedite the distribution of the purchase-money. If his memory served him right, he believed that they never sold more than £2,000,000—he doubted whether it was more than £1,500,000—under the provisions of the Land Act, in any one year.

MR. FLAVIN: At seventeen years purchase.

*MR. WYNDHAM: That is not relevant.

MR. FLAVIN: But it is most important to us.

*MR. WYNDHAM said he cordially agreed with the proposition that the distribution of the purchase-money in the preliminary stages would ultimately set the pace of land purchase, and if in these days of surpluses—which were not enjoyed during the time he was Chief Secretary—help was to be given to Ireland, it could not be given in a better quarter than by strengthening and expanding the Department which had to deal with the distribution of the purchase-money, rather than that part of the machine which dealt with the fixing of rent. If the hopes of land purchase were to be fulfilled, it was obvious that the fixing of rent must become a decreasing and not an increasing operation. If they desired land purchase to go on more rapidly they would have to strengthen the machinery of land purchase throughout from top to bottom. They knew the attitude of the Treasury upon this question. It was certain that the Treasury were not going to raise millions when Consols were at 90, in order that the money might lie for two or three years in the Irish Land Courts. That was an operation which no sane financier would indulge in. If land purchase was to go on at a rapid pace, and if the Treasury saw its way, under happier conditions than had recently prevailed, to assist the operation of land purchase, then the way to assist it was by strengthening the machinery which dealt with the ultimate distribution of the purchase-money. The hon. Member for Waterford had asked for the production of certain instructions to the Estates Commissioners. He was afraid that the hon. and learned Gentleman's wish could not be gratified, for he issued no instructions.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said that he admitted the right hon. Gentleman had not technically issued instructions. But the Estates Commissioners admitted in their Report that letters were written to them containing in effect instructions how they should proceed. When the production of these documents was asked for it was refused, on the ground that the documents were private. It was commonly reported that those instructions hampered the action of the Commissioners just as much as the regulations of the right hon. Member for South Dublin.

***MR. WYNDHAM** said that he issued no instructions; but, though he did not know the grounds for the rumour to which the hon. and learned Member referred, he could guess them. In the first place, it was the duty of the Estates Commissioners to issue directions to their Sub-Commissioners, and the drafts of those directions were brought before him. For their final form he took full responsibility.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said that the interim Report of the Commissioners in 1904 stated—

> "All proceedings under this section have been regulated by the Acts, provisional rules, and the instructions received from time to time from his Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant."

It was also stated that doubtful cases had been—

> "Gradually settled by judical decisions, by instructions received, or by experience."

***MR. WYNDHAM** asked the hon. and learned Member to allow him to proceed. He had only dealt with the first of the two grounds which might have given rise to the rumour. The instructions to the Sub-Commissioners certainly embodied his views not only of what the Act laid down, but of what was the outcome of the debate on the Act—that where an agreement entered into between landlord and tenant was outside the zone it was the duty of the Land Commission to protect the State by inquiring as carefully as ever hitherto had been the case into the security of the holding, or to see that other parties interested did not suffer because the landlord had made an improvident bargain. That was his view when the Bill was debated, and he believed it was the meaning of the Act. That view, he said quite openly, was in the instructions of the Estates Commissioners to the Sub-Commissioners. As to bargains within the zone, he had always held that there was no necessity to look into the security or to protect other interests. The only other ground for the assertion that he had issued instructions to the Commissioners was that he wrote them a letter towards the end of 1904 stating that where property had come into the market owing to intimidation or illegitimate practices, cognisance must be taken of the fact. It had been stated that his communications to the Estates Commissioners prevented progress from being made in dealing with congestion and the reinstatement of evicted tenants. There was no foundation for such a suggestion. He had always been most eager to deal with congestion, and, where possible, not to prevent an estate's being sold because at some time tenants had been evicted. It had been said that he issued instructions contrary to the spirit of the Act. He wished to contradict that.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman consent to the publication of the documents he has mentioned ?

*MR. WYNDHAM said that the hon. and learned Member might have the letter; but there were no other documents—only the verbal communications between any Minister responsible to the House and the officials who worked under him. Those communications must be of a private character, but there was not a word in them that he should not be glad to repeat to the Committee nor a word which departed in one jot or tittle from those matters which were in agreement when the Bill was being debated in the House.

MR. PAUL (Northampton) said he hoped it would not be thought presumptuous if an English Member who had never been officially connected with Ireland like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, were to intrude in this Irish debate. After all this was the Parliament of the United, Kingdom—more or less united according to the policy pursued by the Government of the day. The money which they were voting was British money as well as Irish; unless it was spent for the benefit of the Irish people, in accordance with the opinions of their representatives, it might as well be thrown into the sea. The Acts of Parliament whose administration they were now discussing were both Land Acts and Purchase Acts. It was with the Purchase Acts which, with the leave of the Committee, he proposed to deal. England, Ireland, and Scotland, with all their differences of race, climate, and religion, found a common denominator in Committee of Supply. He was a convert to this purchasing legislation. If he had been in the House when the Purchase Act of 1897 was passed he feared he should have opposed it. He regarded it as a gigantic and very dangerous experiment in British credit. He remembered observing that the discussion upon it was almost entirely confined to Mr. Gerald Balfour, who was then Chief Secretary, and the Gentlemen from Ireland, and he could not help asking himself whether the only person who was not represented in the House of Commons was the British taxpayer. But he freely and frankly admitted that he should have been wrong. Mr. Gladstone once described the Irish tenant as the best rentpayer in the world, and Mr. Gladstone's remark had been justified by the experience of all the Land Acts which had been passed during the last twenty years. The Irish tenant, when he was fairly rented, or when his rent had been fixed by a tribunal in which he had confidence and which was fully acquainted with the facts of the case, would pay to the uttermost farthing. When he was rented upon his own improvements, when the fruits of his labours were diverted from himself and his family to the pockets of his landlord, he would rise in rebellion, as the English tenant would rebel in a like case. While he quite shared the regret expressed by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford that they had not fuller information before them, he was fully enabled, from listening to his speech, to appreciate the nature of the grievance under which hon. Gentlemen from Ireland laboured. They complained that for a long series of years Assistant Commissioners had been appointed of one political complexion, who sympathised with the interest of the landlord rather than that of the tenant. The right hon. Gentleman opposite was much shocked by the criticisms passed upon these functionaries. But he would remind him that it was not only by Nationalist Members that these criticisms had been passed upon the Sub-Commissioners. The late Mr. James Lowther with his racy humour called them the sub-confiscators, and the late Lord Salisbury described them as applying to the land which they had to value the umbrella test. Irish debates were never dull, but some Irish debates were more interesting than others, and he thought the debate which was in progress was more interesting than one with which they were indulged a few evenings ago, when the question was whether there should be for the county of Cork one clerk of the peace or two clerks, and whether if there was one clerk he should have a salary or a salary and a half. Although this Parliament was new and this, its first session, was not very old, it had already been borne in upon his mind that if any appointment in Ireland was not given to anyone who was in the first place a Protestant and in the second place a Unionist, the foundations of Irish society, at least in the North, were rocked and shaken to their very basis. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: And the Empire too.] That was quite correct; as his hon. friend said, the foundations of the Empire were also represented to have been shaken. He would recommend his right hon. friend the Chief Secretary to keep them rocking. It was a perfectly harmless convulsion. There would be no Belfast riots over the appointment of Land Commissioners, and it would be positively indecent to select the last ditch in which to make a stand in the absence of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh. Unless his right hon. friend proceeded, as he was sure he would, in a spirit of union and harmony with those hon. Gentlemen who could speak and could alone speak for the people of Ireland,-the success of these Acts, introduced by Conservatives and passed by Conservative Parliaments, would be absolutely, frustrated and all hope of their favourable result annulled. A great deal, as they all knew, depended upon the spirit in which an Act was administered, and that was more particularly the case in regard to an Act which could not be construed by strict rules or definite legal principles, but which must be interpreted with due regard to the circumstances of the case and to the circumstances of the tenant and the neighbourhood in which he lived. He believed that the electors of this country who had this Irish question brought fully before them the other day, while they were convinced that it would not be possible in this Parliament to pass anything like the legislation for Ireland which Mr. Gladstone introduced in 188 and in 1893, were yet most strongly of opinion that Ireland should be governed as Lord Dudley, when Lord-Lieutenant, said—in accordance with Irish ideas. Speaking for his own constituents, and, he believed, for those of most of his hon. friends around him, he would say that the more thoroughly the Government acted, not merely in union with the opinions of hon. Members from Ireland sitting below the gangway, but by associating them so far as was possible under the present system with the administration of their own country, the better the people of England and Scotland would be pleased. They knew very well that when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover resigned, and when he ought to have been followed into retirement by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London whose policy was precisely the same as that of the late Chief Secretary, there came a change over the spirit of Irish administration, and that all attempt to conciliate the Irish people in the administration of these Acts and in other ways was given up. For reasons which he did not presume to criticise, it seemed impossible that an Irish Member should become Chief Secretary for Ireland, but the more responsibility it was possible to throw upon these Gentlemen who understood the wants and wishes of and were responsible to the Irish people the better it would be for Great Britain, because the better would Ireland be governed. He thought the hon. Member for Waterford, if he would forgive his saying so, was a little inclined to be hard upon the Chief Secretary. His right hon. friend was in a very difficult position. He had to deal not merely with hon. Gentlemen from Ireland in Parliament, but with Dublin Castle which was not what its name would imply, a frowning feudal fortress, but a congested district of impervious officialdom, not unlike the War Office in London. It would be necessary for his right hon. friend to assert the legitimate authority which belonged to him, to teach the officers of the Crown in Dublin that they were the servants of the public, that if they were not directly answerable to this House he was answerable for them and that he would not approve of any acts on their part which he was not prepared himself to justify from his place in Parliament. He was quite sure that if in the administration of these Purchase Acts his right hon. friend went upon the principles laid down by the hon. Member for Waterford and accepted by the whole of the Party which he so ably led, he would receive the steady, the hearty, the united and the loyal support of the Liberal Party in the House and in the country by whom his appointment was received with such hearty applause.

*MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.) said he rose to support this Motion and to submit to the Committee his reasons for doing so. In the first place he would enter a protest against the shortness of the time assigned for this debate. The subject of the Irish Land Commission was of such magnitude that it naturally divided itself into two distinct portions, namely, rent fixing and sale, and a separate day should have been allotted to each. The fact that sufficient time was not allowed for the purpose of discussing both those subjects separately must be his excuse for trespassing upon the indulgence of the Committee at greater length than he would otherwise have done. Farms in Ireland had descended for generations from father to son, and having been neglected utterly by those who occupied the position of owners, a certain class of equitable ownership inevitably grew up in Ireland, in favour of those who did all the improvements on the farms and who had reclaimed in many cases a portion of them and in some cases the whole. This equitable ownership was recognised in Ulster in favour of the tenants, but in the other three Provinces it was, as a whole, ignored, and the landlords appropriated the tenants' property, while they increased the rent in proportion to the extent to which the tenants improved their holdings. At length, after untold hardships and indescribable misery, this state of things culminated in a semi-revolution and the tenant right was tardily recognised by the Land Act of 1881. That Act was a big step towards the settlement of the land question. It was the first recognition of the tenant's property in his holding, of the landlord's rapacity, of the unreality of contract between them, and of the necessity for a special tribunal to restrain one section of the community from robbing the other. That, at the time, was called a measure of confiscation, and the author of it, Mr. Gladstone, was roundly abused as a revolutionary. That Act enabled every tenant to whom it applied to sell his tenant right or occupation interest, and in the event of his being disturbed in his position he obtained compensation for the tenant right apart from and in addition to the compensation for improvements to which he might be entitled. The tenant right and the improvements, being alike the tenant's own property, the landlord was not entitled to have rent fixed in respect of either, or to have the price fixed in respect of either in the event of his selling to the tenant. In short, the joint ownership, which had always existed from the point of view of moral justice, was at last recognised by statute, and the landlord and the tenant became part owners. No sooner had the denunciations of that Act and its author blown over, than the very persons who had uttered them directed their attention to monopolising, in the interest of their class, all the offices by means of which the Act was to be worked, and the landlords who occupied the position of convicted criminals so asserted themselves that, with the help of Mr. Gladstone's colleagues, they succeeded in getting into their hands the greater portion of the working of this great measure. The Act was intended as a charter of justice to the tenants of Ireland, but the administration of it was put into the hands largely of the people who had made that charter necessary. Wholesale injustice had long been committed unheeded by the British Parliament until it had provoked desperation and outrage. It was only then that Parliament recognised the extent of the injustice by establishing these special tribunals to settle the matter, and in true English fashion in dealing with Ireland spoiled its own gift by putting the administration of the charter into the hands of the interested parties. When the Tories came into office they were not troubled with any scruples, but simply put in supporters of the landlord faction. The law and the facts were so clear that no one could fail to appreciate them, but the Commissioners and sub-Commissioners succeeded at the outset in confusing the law and the facts, and that confusion had been purposely continued during the twenty-five years in which this rent fixing had been in operation. During the whole of that time the Commissioners had shirked their plain duty of laying down the principle under which they and the sub-Commissioners were to act in such a way that there was to-day radical disagreement among them on fundamental points. What some of the Commission regarded and what he agreed was regarded as Mr. Justice Meredith's perversion of the law upon this point was bad on all counts. It was that any form of competition which had the effect of unduly inflating the letting value of a holding beyond what would otherwise be its fair letting value was not to be taken into consideration as a ground for increasing fair rents. That was a characteristic example of Irish interpretation of a law. It meant that there was no tenant or occupation interest, and the thing which the Land Act of 1881 enabled the tenant to sell did not now exist. Mr. Justice Meredith had not the courage to use those words, but he intended that his words should be so construed, and knew that they were being so construed. Of that he had the best possible proof. The Chief Secretary, in answer to a Question put to him, had said that it had been decided that no reduction could be made on account of the tenants' occupation interest beyond his interest in his improvements on his holding. That meant, in other words, that the first section of the Land Act of 1881 had been repealed by Mr. Justice Meredith. That was a provision of law at present in force in Ireland, owing, in the first place, to the poverty and inability of the tenants to remedy it, and, in the second place, to the well-founded want of confidence in the Courts. Though the Land Act of 1881 incidentally mentioned the words "future tenants," there was nothing in that Act which suggested in any way the creation of a new class, but the Commissioners immediately set about creating and increasing a permanent class of people under the name of future tenants. The Unionist Government embodied in the Act of 1887 a section rendering the intervention of the sheriff unnecessary, and making it possible to evict in Ireland after notice by a letter addressed through the Post Office. After a letter had been posted and a few other trifling formalities complied with, the tenant was destroyed and transformed into that hopeless outlaw, the future tenant. He might be dragged by a policeman like a thief from the house he had built and the home he had created. The Act of 1896 directed the Court to ascertain and record the gross fair rent from which the improvements, which were to be similarly ascertained, were to be deducted. That was in accordance with the Act of 1881. But in most cases there was not even a pretence made to comply with the law. What was called the Pink Schedule and all the forms and rules as they now stood were, in his opinion, planned with the deliberate purpose of taking out of the tenants' pockets money they had honestly earned and transferring it to the pockets of the landlord, and they had successfully effected this from 1881 to the present time. In most cases there was not even a pretence made to comply with the law in making up the schedule. There was nothing in the record to show that any account had been taken of the price of produce and of labour and of the increase of local burdens and the various burdens which the tenants had to bear in a country without manufactures. There was no data to show whether proper deductions were made or not, and there was no authority for saying that proper deductions had been made except the unsupported assertions of the Commissioners. No tenant was offered any means of ascertaining what the grounds were on which a high rent was fixed. The pink schedule was not available to the unfortunate tenant; he was simply told on a contemptuous half-penny postcard the amount of the fine imposed upon him. Even when a Court Valuer had ascertained and reported improvements made by a tenant, there was no guarantee that justice would be done. No deductions could be allowed for improvements unless a formal schedule of them was made out. In one case which he had inquired into, the tenant had made extensive improvements in draining his farm, and those drains were shown to the Court Valuer when he inspected the land, but because the tenant had not lodged in Court a formal schedule of them, no allowance could be made in respect of them. The Court made the man pay for that improvement for no better reason than that he had not complied with a technical requirement not of the law, but the Court itself. That was a great injustice, and he had no hesitation in branding it as an outrage on justice. Having shown the improvements to the Court Valuer on the ground this man was entitled to believe that he had done all the law required him to do and that he was entitled to full credit for those improvements. He warned the Committee to guard themselves against the suggestion that there was anything exceptional in this case. If there was, an independent examination of the files would be welcomed by the Land Commissioners as the best means of refuting the charge and vindicating themselves. But when he asked for such an examination, instead of availing themselves of it, the Land Commissioners sheltered themselves behind the suggestion that this request was unprecedented. Was not the tribunal itself unprecedented? This special tribunal had only been in operation five years when the Government found it necessary to order a revision of the whole of the rents that it had been fixing in the first term. This tribunal had systematically pursued a course diametrically opposed to that laid down by the law under which it acted. It purposely rendered it imposible for anybody to investigate its proceedings, and when challenged it shirked all inquiry. At the hearing in the Courts the Chief Commissioner and Sub-Commissioners hurried through the cases so rapidly that it was absolutely impossible to have due regard to their respective merits. Some of these rent-fixing Courts dealt with as many as 200 cases in a week of five days of five hours each day. That was an average of seven and a half minutes to each case. It was manifestly impossible to take and consider the evidence from both sides in such a short time. In a certain case, owing to these methods, the tenant's statement was not complete until after the decision was given. That did not matter much, but when the tenant found an exorbitant rent fixed upon him for fifteen years he naturally murmured, and mentioned, among other things, that a large portion of his farm was covered with water during several months in the year. The Judicial Commissioner who was fixing the rent, and whose decision they were asked in this Committee to respect, had no better answer to give than to tell the tenant to go and drink the broth. That flippant and heartless remark was a specimen of what they were desired to regard with awe as judicial decisions. The gentleman who made it was one of those recently re-appointed by the Chief Secretary. For himself he had just as little confidence in the new appointments made by the Chief Secretary as he had in the older appointments. The right hon. Gentleman had strangely selected them from among the admirers of his predecessor and opponent. The baneful effects of the Land Conference were not confined to ruinous prices for land. It was an integral part of the Conference to destroy the rent-fixing Courts in order to force the tenants to purchase on the landlord's terms. The Land Commission, vicious always, had surpassed itself since that unfortunate Conference invented the system of purchase regardless of value. That invention gave the landlords such a chance of fancy prices as they had never hoped for, and so excited their innate cupidity that Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners were influenced in advance to promote the game. The Courts had been thus degraded mainly with the object of forcing tenants to buy at exorbitant prices, and incidentally to degrade the Courts utterly in the eyes of the people in the promotion of that main object. The name of justice had been so misused and polluted as to amount to a moral menace. From that time, though the cost of labour and the burden of local rates had increased, though seasons had been bad, product short, and prices low, the Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners had, according to official returns, given on an average only half the reductions they had been accustomed to give in previous years. In some instances, to his knowledge, landlords themselves, bad as they were, had on the advice of their own valuers given higher reductions. For all the hardships of which the Nationalist Members complained, both Chief and Sub-Commissioners were to blame, but more particularly the Chief Commissioners, for they formed the rules of practice which their subordinates had to obey. They were the greatest scourge upon the people to whom they dispensed their perversion of the law. Yet that was the tribunal to which the Chief Secretary directed people as a Court of Appeal and fountain of justice. Before they could get those Courts respected they must make them respectable. A courageous exercise of existing powers would accomplish all that was necessary. He sincerely hoped the Chief Secretary was inspired by a nobler ambition than to become another item in the long list of British failures in Ireland. If the right hon. Gentleman were equal to the needs and the opportunity now presented to him he would insist upon an immediate revision of the forms, rules, practices and interpretation of the Land Commission in order to bring them into accord with the letter and spirit of the statutes, and side by side with that he would also insist upon an immediate revision within the current term of all existing judicial rents, such as was ordered by Section 29 of the Act of 1887. All this was easy for the Chief Secretary to do, and he would do it if the frost of Dublin Castle had not already frozen up the fountain of justice and liberalism at his heart. So much for the Land Commission proper as a rent fixing machine.

He would now ask permission to say a few words on the Land Commission in its relation to purchase. In that respect the Act of 1903 was the most one-sided measure ever passed, and the greatest instrument of extortion ever devised. If it were important to the tenant that he should not be obliged to pay either rent or price for what was already his own property, when the buying was done with public money, and the public were responsible in case of default, it was of public importance that no money should be advanced for what would in business be regarded as a bogus sale. By bogus sales he meant all those now being carried out in obedience to the decision in the King-Harman case, in which the landlords were being paid out of public funds the price of a thing that never belonged to them, with a bonus of 12 per cent. added. Such a swindling system as that was so utterly indefensible that they were not without hope that the Chief Secretary would insist on having the decision overturned. The great achievement of the Land Conference embodied in the Land Act of 1903, was to abolish inspection for value, that protection of the tenant and of the State, to remove that obstacle to landlord rapacity and to allow the landlord a free hand at extortion. Henceforth the price of a farm was not to depend upon its value, but upon the skill of the landlord and the simplicity and embarrassment of the tenant. Under former Purchase Acts when holdings were inspected for value, advances were refused in 7,838 cases, generally on the ground that the prices which the tenants had agreed to pay were more than the holdings were worth. A large number of estates had been sold under the Act of 1903 at prices five years purchase more than the prices under the previous Acts, and therefore five years in excess of their true value. Advances to the full amount of those prices had, according to the latest information, been made in all except 693 cases. The inflation of prices beyond value was the greatest and most obvious effect of the zone system, but it was not the only effect. That system, in the hands of skilful landlords and agents playing upon tenants who had been deprived of their last shilling, and, consequently, of their courage, amounted to a real and deadly compulsion to accept any terms the landlord pleased to lay down. In the vast marjority of cases the tenants had nothing to say to the terms but sign them. The only choice left to them was immediate destruction by eviction or a slower destruction by purchase, and the easier but the worse course was generally taken. The tenants, by signing these agreements, enabled the landlords to get the money from the State. It was only one tenant in 1,000 who had the moral courage to face immediate ruin by refusing to sign the landlord's terms. Such a tenant, while sacrificing himself, did a distinct service to the State. He regretted to have to add that the Estates Commissioners so far from recognising that service showed very scant favour to such a man. He enjoyed the distinction of having in his constituency a landlord who had sold a slum estate comprising a swamp farm appropriately occupied by a lunatic tenant. The landlord got the lunatic to purchase the swamp at more than twice its value. On the strength of that agreement it seemed that the landlord had obtained the cash amount of that monstrous price with the handsome bonus of 12 per cent. added, and he had left the Estates Commissioners to sue the lunatic for the annuities. It was needless to ask what any decent man would think of such a landlord. He thought this was the time and place to ask what were they to think of the supervision exercised by the Commissioners over their inspectors in the presence of such a transaction? Did any Member of Parliament who voted for the Act of 1903 realise that it would be used as a trap for lunatics? That landlord was a specimen of the class to which the British Parliament in a fit of one-sided generosity had voted four or five bonuses. The first bonus was a free grant in cash of 12 per cent. added to the purchase money. This was called in the discussions on the Bill a financial bridge to enable landlords and tenants to meet, and be equally beneficial to both. Had this been used honestly for that purpose they would for the sake of peace have abstained from criticism, but no precaution whatever was taken in the Act against a dishonest use of the bonus, and the more avaricious a landlord was the greater was his reward. True to their nature the landlords had used and were using it to the extreme of dishonesty. So far from letting the bonus be of any use to the tenants the landlords had taken it all to themselves and had increased its amount by increasing the price. This bonus was worth somewhat more than three years purchase and it amounted to £12,000,000. The second bonus was given to the landlords by way of relief from the costs of sales. Under this head they were relieved from the payment of stamp duties, which would otherwise cost them 2½ per cent. on the amount of purchase money; expenses of publication and of notices; expenses of preparation of surveys, of notices on public departments, and of searches in the registry of deeds, titles and judgments and negotiation fees in cases of sales to the Commissioners. Those savings were worth one year's purchase, or about £4,000,000. The third bonus was received by landlords of mortgaged estates, which constituted the vast majority of Irish estates. On receiving money from the State at 2¾ per cent., they could clear off the mortgages which were now costing them 4½ or 5 per cent., and thus effect the savings, amounting in many cases to two years purchase. The fourth bonus was the legislative miracle by which the Act enabled the landlord without any disturbance of his household gods to sell his house and demesne and afterwards enjoy in comfort the house and demesne and the price of them, the sham sale having been to himself. This was a fine specimen, surely, of Unionist finance. It would be observed that all these bonuses flowed straight in the same direction. Parliament was dealing with two sections of the community and it ought to have been impartial. If favours were to be shown at all it should have been to the poorer of the two sections. Did the Act give any bonus to the tenants?

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member appears to be spending a great deal of time in criticising the Act. He must adhere to the administration of the Act, and he is not entitled to discuss any errors of legislation.

*MR. GINNELL (continuing) said that the bonus did not give any benefit to the tenants; in fact it only increased their difficulties. The Act gave them nothing but zones by means of which the landlords could hold them as in a vice absolutely at their mercy, and make the Act where it suited them compulsory. One could not help admiring the accuracy with which one landlord had described the situation, for when his poor tenants murmured against the price he demanded he told them they were only biting granite. The bonus of 12 per cent. which was to have formed a financial bridge enabling landlords, without loss, to sell more cheaply than under the previous Acts had only increased their cupidity. The Chief Secretary had admitted in a carefully prepared reply that the average price under the Act of 1903, exclusive of bonus, instead of being less than under previous Acts, was five years purchase more. In other words the cash which the landlord received, including the bridge bonus, was eight years purchase more under the new Act than under the old. If they added the other bonuses which he had just mentioned they would find that in many cases the landlord was able to get, under this extraordinary Act, up to twelve years purchase more than the holding was worth. He would give the Committee an illustration. A landlord who sold under the Act of 1896 a farm rented at £100 for seventeen and three-quarter years purchase, which was rather over the average under that Act, would receive £1,775, out of which he would pay all the costs of the sale; he could, under the Act of 1903, sell a farm of the same value for twenty-two years purchase, receive £2,200, with a bonus of £264 added, or a total in cash of £2,464, free from all costs of sale. This was a cash gain to him of £698 in excess of what an inspecting department would certify that farm to be worth. To that sum had to be added the relief from cost of sale and other advantages. That was what the Land Conference had done for the individual landlord in respect of a single farm. He would now consider the question from a tenant's point of view. Supposing a tenant, paying a rent of £100, bought his farm under the Act of 1896 at seventeen and three-quarters years purchase. That tenant would in the term of forty-two and a half years make a total payment in principal and interest of £3,017 10s. A tenant buying the same farm under the Act of 1903 at the same number of years purchase would in the term of 68½ years make a total payment of £3,951 15s. 3d. That was to say, that the same farm at the same number of years purchase would cost the purchaser £934 5s. 3d. more under the new Act than under the old. As against that increase he had nothing but the longer time for repayment. That was the true and entire value of the farm according to the scheme. But value having been abolished as a measure of price, the landlord now could and did charge more than the true value. According to the latest returns the average price without the bonus was twenty-two years purchase. At this rate the tenant rented at £100 must make a total payment of £4,897 15s., being an increase of £1,880 5s. over his total payments under the Act of 1896. That was what the Land Conference had cost the individual tenant. The result was bonuses for the landlords and zones for the tenants. Who would deny that class legislation had in this Act its most brilliant example?

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is still criticising the Act, and that is not in order. He is only entitled to criticise the administration of the Act by the Land Commission. The hon. Member is a new Member, and I have for that reason given him a good deal of latitude. He must, however, deal only with the administration of the Land Commission and not with mistakes in the legislation of the past, or indeed with what he thinks is wanted in the legislation of the future.

*MR. GINNELL submitted, with great respect, that he was leading up to that point in order to show the effect of the zones. He proposed to show that the evils of the zone system could be remedied without legislation.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That will be in order.

*MR. GINNELL said that in 1903 the then Chief Secretary gave to Parliament his opinion that all the saleable land in Ireland could be bought for £100,000,000, and he got Parliament to vote that sum and a further £12,000,000 as a bonus to enable vendors and purchasers to meet easily without losing sight of the true value as settled by the scale of prices when inspection was practised. If they were charitably to assume that he expected the landlords to sell at a somewhat lower number of years purchase than previously, on the bridge theory, and that he cared at all for the solvency of Ireland, how scandalised he must be now to find his pets extracting such prices that £150,000,000 would be required to buy the amount of land he had in his mind. Of the £112,000,000 the landlords would receive in cash as the true value of the land about £73,000,000. They would receive in cash in excess of that value by virtue of the zones, £22,000,000, and in cash also the so-called bonus of £12,000,000. They would receive in relief from the costs of sale and relief from mortgages at least £5,000,000. In other words, for property worth £73,000,000 they would receive £112,000,000, being £39,000,000 in excess of the value. He was, of course, aware that this was not the way in which the bonus was calculated, that it was calculated on the entire price, and that the higher the price the landlord charged the greater was his reward at the public expense. But the method of calculation was not very material when the net result was as he had stated. That was what the Act of 1903 did for one section of the community. Let them see what it did for the other section. It so arranged the matter that for this property worth £73,000,000, which the tenants could have purchased on inspection under previous Acts for £124,524,982 in the term of forty-two and a half years, they must now pay £202,118,386 in the term of sixty-eight and a half years, being £77,593,404 in excess of what they would have been obliged to pay had inspection been retained. This £77,000,000 was what the land conference had cost the Irish people. It was the result of the lamb lying down even for a brief period with the wolf. What a fine inducement for conferences on other subjects! When the Act which produced these results was passing through Parliament the right hon. Gentleman who was now Prime Minister used these wise and honest words, but, alas, used them in vain—

> "I am not willing to put a load on the tenant's back under which he must entirely break down and involve us all in disaster in order that the landlord should get, not a fair price, but an inflated security. If there are to be sacrifices in this matter, and there must be, these sacrifices must be mutual. Whilst it is right under existing circumstances that these gentlemen (the landlords) should receive just, and even generous treatment, they have no right to escape laden with the spoils of war, no right to burden the tenant and leave a legacy of future trouble for the State."

Mr. Ginnell.

The landlords were now going away laden with the money which the Treasury was advancing without regard to value. He asked hon. Members to look to it that they did not persist in sowing the trouble for the State which the Prime Minister apprehended. Was all the flagrant extortion now being practised nothing to those who passed by the way? Was the Chief Secretary content to play the *role* of the unconcerned spectator while the country he had undertaken to govern was being juggled and cheated? Would he apply nothing more effective than civil commonplaces to the class who were making the people bite granite? While on the one hand certain provisions of the Act were being used dishonestly, and while on the other the provisions of the same Act for the acquisition and distribution of untenanted land, which was so much needed, remained almost a dead letter, the Chief Secretary appeared to think that the Irish representatives should be satisfied when he threw up his hands in sympathetic despair and said he could do nothing. What sort of answer was that in the mouth of a Liberal statesman with a huge and, he believed, generous majority at his back? Why did people, uninvited, undertake to govern a country if, with the power in their hands, they would not remedy great and admitted evils? Immediate compulsory sale at a fair price and the payment to landlords of 75 per cent. of their gross incomes on second term rents, or their equivalent, pending inspection of the holdings, would, he believed, be the quickest and fairest solution of the problem. If the Government proposed such a measure he felt sure that the House would pass it. But, pending legislation, much more could be done by administration than the Chief Secretary had yet realised. Though the Estates Commissioners were under the control of Dublin Castle they deserved credit for having early this year exposed to public contempt the illegal instructions to which the Castle had subjected them. That was a courageous act and a distinct public service. But the Commissioners had to wait for two years and a change of Government before they mustered courage to do it. Had they done it three months earlier, while the Unionists were in power, it would have cost them their positions. He did not say that to detract from any merit due, but in view of the Castle's capacity for mischief it was wholesome for the Commissioners to know that the Irish Members could measure them accurately and would not shrink from doing so. It might have been better to have left the Commissioners free to administer the Act in accordance with its terms and spirit, unhampered by any regulations. If regulations there must be, the new were preferable to the old. But the instructions issued under them to the inspectors were not in all respects satisfactory. What steps did the Commissioners take to ascertain whether the proposed purchasers submitted to them were *bona fide* tenants? Was any record kept of purchasers who had in recent years been graziers on eleven months tenure of the lands they had been enabled to purchase? What measures were taken to counteract the designs of graziers upon untenanted lands and to reserve those lands for the beneficial distribution which was so large an element in getting the Act passed? Where there was reason to believe that the proposed purchaser was insolvent, or stripped of means for working a farm, was inquiry made as to whether that condition was due to excessive rent, and whether the purchase price was calculated on that rent? Were prices being revised with the view of lowering the value of farm produce by the importation of cattle and products? Were some inspectors taking one course and others an opposite course on any or on all of those points? A very considerable amount of good could be effected by uniformity of principle and of practice throughout the administration. No such uniformity had hitherto existed even outside the zones where there was unquestionably a free hand. No one would undertake the moral defence of what had been done within the zones. The zone trick by which inspection was evaded was in practice, in the circumstances of Ireland, such a gross piece of systematic dishonesty as would not be tolerated for a day in any self-ruled country. Could that trick be exploded without legislation? He believed it could. In the beginning some of the Commissioners thought they had jurisdiction to check the price with the value in all cases. They probably thought so still, notwithstanding Judge Meredith's decision to the contrary. He suggested that a serious effort would be made to have that decision reversed. But he believed that it could in any case be nullified and prices brought back to the standard of value by a Treasury minute forbidding the Estates Commissioners to advance in any case a price in excess of the value of the interest which the landlord had to sell. Who would have a right to complain of an order so just? No one except a dishonest landlord.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.) thought he would find himself on this occasion in substantial agreement with a good deal of what had been said by the hon. Member for Waterford and other Members. He was unable to express himself in agreement with the hon. Member for North Westmeath however, because he was not able to recognise either his facts or his statement and interpretation of the law. If the Chief Secretary failed to understand the facts of the hon. Member, perhaps the Attorney-General who had written a book on the Land Act would be able to come to his assistance.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): You are not a model of clearness yourself.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH said that in reference to land purchase which had been spoken of both by the hon. Member for Waterford and by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, he thought anyone who had the interests of Ireland at heart would be most anxious to see a settlement of the land war effected with all possible speed. They would all be glad to see the evicted tenants question satisfactorily settled. They would be glad to see successfully dealt with the problem of the grazing lands of the west and the provision of better houses for the congested districts, and he hoped it would have the result of staying the drain of emigration from that part of the country. Whether that result would or would not follow, he would not venture to prophesy, but at any rate the experiment was well worth the trial. It was only his anxiety to say or do something to accelerate the operations of the Land Purchase Commissioners that he ventured upon the Motion on the adjournment for the holidays to bring forward several suggestions which had been repeated in the present debate. On that occasion he alluded to the fact that the operations of land purchase were very much retarded by the difficulties arising from the distribution of the purchase money, and he desired to suggest that it was impossible for the Land Commissioners to distribute the purchase money at a rate which would keep pace with the sales going on. He then suggested that it would be the truest economy to give him assistance to dispose of the congestion of business that had arisen in the Estates Commissioners' Office. Everything that was done to expedite land purchase would be a saving on the side of the rent fixing and other Departments of the Irish Land Commission; although it had been very profitable from the lawyers' point of view for the last 20 years, he did not hesitate to say, putting aside personal interests, that there was not a man who would not be delighted to see the rent fixing tribunal come to an end. He mentioned a case in which he was counsel, which came up as far back as 1898, and had not been finally disposed of yet. Indeed it might be several months before the tenant knew what his ultimate judicial rent was to be. There were hundreds of similar cases. There were only one or two small matters in which he felt compelled to dissent from the views of previous speakers. The case of Mr. Porter seemed to excite the hon. Member for South Tyrone very much. Perhaps he did not vote for his hon. friend at the last election. Let him be given time and he might on the next occasion, and then perhaps they would not hear so much about it.

An HON. MEMBER: He could not be found.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR rose to a point of order. Was the hon. and learned Gentleman in order in attributing such a motive to the hon. Member for South Tyrone?

Mr. Fetherstonhaugh.

*The CHAIRMAN said he did not think the hon. Member was really aspersing the motives of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. He thought it was said more by way of a joke than anything else.

Mr. FETHERSTONHAUGH said that if the remark was taken at all seriously he would at once withdraw it. It was intended as something in the nature of a joke. Did the hon. Member for South Tyrone by his reflections on the sub-Commissioners mean to suggest that if he was offered a position which might shortly become vacant with a satisfactory salary he would not take it? He ventured to think that if any sane man was offered a post with a satisfactory salary he would be willing to take it. He objected to the criticisms made by the hon. Members for Waterford and South Tyrone upon the sub-Commissioners. He himself did not hold a brief for either landlord or tenant, but he regretted that persons who had to discharge judicial functions should be discussed in this Committee in the manner in which they had been discussed, and that they should have it borne in upon their minds that their continuance in office was dependent upon the popular opinion of the Committee. Persons who discharged judicial duties ought, according to our constitution, to discharge them independently. He quite recognised the difficulty pointed out by the right hon. Member for Dover in appointing people to permanent office when they might not after a time be required. He did not quite see how the difficulty could have been got over, but he did say that when once men were appointed and proved satisfactory in the discharge of their duties they should be kept on—if he might use the phrase—permanently in a temporary office, that was that they should have security of tenure as long as their services were wanted. It was said that these sub-Commissioners were a lot of military officers and land agents and members of other unsuitable professions. The last return showed that they numbered ninety-six, of whom only six were landowners or simple owners of land and nothing else; six were neither landlords nor tenants; thirty-four were combined in the ownership and in the tenancy of land. That meant that in many instances they held one piece of land in fee simple and were tenants of other large pieces of land adjoining. Out of the ninety-six there were fifty who were tenant farmers; only three had ever been in the Army and twenty were described, in addition to farming, either as landlord or tenant, as being estate agents, auctioneers, and such like. He thought it was an unfortunate thing that it should be stated in this Committee that these men who discharged very difficult and delicate functions were dependent upon the opinion of the majority of Members. He knew nothing about rents or whether they were high or low, but he deprecated the fact that these gentlemen should be threatened with dismissal if rents were higher this year than they were last. They called it conspiracy, but who were the conspirators? Two Judges, one a Judge of the High Court and the other Mr. Commissioner Fitzgerald, who was regarded and paid as a Judge. Was it suggested that they had entered into a conspiracy to raise rents since the passing of the Act? He had heard skilled valuers say, under cross-examination, that the fall of prices was very sharp from 1878 to 1890. From that time on there was not such a fall of prices and the prices of many things on which rents were fixed, sheep, pigs, store cattle, etc., had not declined since 1890. He was not discussing whether rents should or should not be reduced, but he was suggesting that undoubtedly valuers of great eminence held that although first term rents fixed between 1880 and 1890 required very considerable reduction to make them fair rents when they came up for revision, when they came to rents fixed after 1890 they did not find at all the same need for subsequent revision as the earlier cases required. That might very possibly account for the figures which the hon. Member for South Tyrone had quoted showing that the average reduction during the past ten or twelve years was greater than the average reduction in 1905. Rents fixed in 1905 would be first term rents or they would be second term rents that had been fixed later than 1890. He had frequently heard it said that where a tenant since 1881 had not gone into Court down to the year 1905 that he must have considered his rent, on the whole, pretty fair, and that it was only because when times had changed he thought he would get a small reduction he went into Court in 1905, and then he would not expect to get so big a reduction as a man who felt the pinch earlier in 1881 and went into Court then. That was enough, he thought, to acquit the Commissioners of the gross charge of conspiracy that had been made against them by the hon. Member for South Tyrone. He often heard the Commissioners abused by both sides, and it had always struck him that it might be said, in justice to these gentlemen, that, in the matter of fixing rents, if they pleased neither party, the chances were that the rent they fixed was pretty fair. He could not think that the sub-Commissioners had ever been neglectful of the interests of the tenants. Considering that the landlords of Ireland did not return a single Member and that the tenants returned the whole 105, he should think that it was very unlikely that the sub-Commissioners would act in the interests of a class who, however powerful they might have been in the past, certainly since 1885 had been totally deprived of political power. It was a most lamentable thing that the conduct of a Judge should be discussed in the Committee in this way, and that it should be plainly held out to him that his salary and his continuance in office was to be dependent on the decisions he gave. It tended to arouse a want of confidence. It was suggested that the rents were raised with the object of affecting the purchase price. Surely if the tenant was aware that his rent had been fixed too high he would not give that same number of years purchase as he otherwise would. He did not think the landlords or the tenants were so ignorant of their rights that they would rush into a bargain that would be destructive to either. They had been brought together in a wonderful manner since the Act of 1903. The Return published with regard to this matter showed that up to February, 1906, land sales amounting to nearly £33,000,000 had been agreed to. When people blamed a landlord or a tenant for holding back, did they imagine that in the three years after the passing of that Act in 1903 nearly one-third of the land of Ireland would be dealt with? He did not say that these agreements had come in too fast. He would have been glad to have seen more of them, but he thought they had come in as quickly as they could. The fault he had to find with the Act was, first, that the money was not forthcoming, and, secondly, that the staff of Commissioners was not sufficient to deal with the money they had got. Not having the money held back many a sale. Many a man, if he thought he could get the money in time, would be glad to sell his estate. But the staff was not sufficient to deal with the matter, and that was why he had suggested the appointment of more Commissioners and examining clerks. He had made that suggestion with some practical knowledge of the workings of the office. He had also suggested the appointment of an additional Judge to assist Mr. Justice Meredith. He had never heard that the Commissioners were idle and did not do their work, and he had come across numbers of solicitors and others who had to do business with the office. He had simply made that suggestion because he thought it would accelerate the work. Surely they were all agreed, whatever might be the ultimate destiny of their country, whether it took the shape of the aspirations of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway or the shape that he and those who sat with him desired, that the remedy for the chronic evil from which poor old Ireland suffered could only be found in the solution of the land question. That should not be a Party question between them. All Members representing Ireland should associate themselves with that good work.

Mr. MEAGHER (Kilkenny, N.) said that in dealing with this matter he did not wish to go over the ground which had been traversed by his hon. friends, and therefore as a tenant farmer he would confine himself to a few pertinent facts that had come under his own particular observation. He had heard a good deal as to the appointment and re-appointment of the temporary Sub-Commissioners, but as things were he did not see that the farmers of Ireland would be any worse off if those Sub-Commissioners were swept away root and branch. In his opinion some means should be devised whereby second-term rents should be fixed on a different basis from the casual and ineffectual method adopted at the present time. He failed to see the necessity for a revaluation of the land after fifteen years occupation. The Commissioners when they came first valued the land as they found it and took into consideration the improvements which the landlord or tenant had made upon it, as the case might be. At the end of sixteen years, when the tenant had made his improvements upon the land and spent his money for them, a second Commissioner came out who had no knowledge of the state of the land fifteen years previously, and valued the land again. In the case of one holding the land of which he saw at the time of its first valuation the tenant farmer thought he was to have credit for all his improvements. He spent £275 in draining and improving the land, and fifteen years afterwards a Sub-Commissioner walked the land and what did he do? After the expenditure of £275 upon the land the tenant got 10s. reduction. When the second term rent was fixed the landlord appealed and the old rent was restored.

And it being a quarter-past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

The House resumed.

LANCASHIRE ELECTRIC POWER BILL.
(By Order.)

Read a second time, and committed.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Caldwell (Lanark, Mid.) in the Chair.]

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £124,215 be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Land Commission."

Whereupon Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £124,115, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

MR. MEAGHER, continuing his speech, said that from beginning to end the tenant class of Ireland had had no material improvement in their condition in comparison with the fall of prices. It was too costly to take cases into court, besides which the results were too unsatisfactory. He maintained that unless compulsory powers were given to the commissioners to purchase untenanted lands the question of the evicted tenants would never be solved. He had asked the Chief Secretary how many evicted tenants in the county of Kilkenny at the date of the passing of the Land Act of 1903 were entitled to be restored to their holdings, and how many were restored to their holdings. The answer he received was that 153 had lodged applications and three tenants had been restored to their holdings. But his question was how many evicted tenants were in Kilkenny at the passing of the Act who were entitled under that Act to be restored to their holdings. A Return showed him that there were 301 instead of 153. He did not for a moment insinuate that the right hon. Gentleman wished to mislead him, but what he (Mr. Meagher) wanted to call attention to was the fact that half of the evicted tenants were so downhearted and had so little confidence in the Act that they absolutely refused to lodge applications for reinstatement under the Act. In his own county there was a case in which 375 people had been turned out of their holdings to make room for sheep and bullocks, and the owner was living in Washington, in the United States. In the case in question 1,600 acres of land had gone into wilderness through want of cultivation. Compulsory powers of acquiring these untenanted lands were necessary if the question of the evicted tenants was to be dealt with successfully. Unless there was some vital amendment of the Act he failed to see by what means the evicted tenants could be restored.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.) congratulated his hon. friend upon his maiden speech. He had spoken very feelingly upon a detail of the Irish land question, in which he also took a very deep interest. It was a question which vitally affected the whole settlement of the land question as well as the peace and well-being of the country. They all expected when the Act of 1903 was passed that it would have brought about a speedy solution of the difficulty, but in that expectation they had been to a large extent disappointed. In his own county he was glad to say they had done somewhat better than was the case in his hon. friend's county. At the passing of the Act they had, he believed, 189 evicted tenants, and they had succeeded in settling seventy-nine. That, so far as it went, was satisfactory, but it had not yet settled the question, and his reason for rising in the debate was solely to urge the Government to take every means in their power to expedite the settlement of this burning question. They believed the Government were actuated by a sympathetic feeling towards Ireland, and hon. Members from Ireland asked them to utilise their opportunities and powers especially for the evicted tenants. He did not quite agree with his hon. friend that they could not make satisfactory progress under the existing measure. He thought that within the confines of the existing Land Purchase Act there were great opportunities for the settlement of the question, but what was wanted was more energy and more courage in the administration of the Act. What they wanted was that the sympathy of the Government should translate itself into action, and that no opportunity should be missed of settling the case of any evicted tenant. It was purely a question of administration. The Estates Commissioners had ample power to clear any farm or estate, and they could declare any parcel of land an estate, with a view to settling on it the evicted tenants. No opportunity should be missed to remove this great social sore which had proved such a great drawback to the social peace and prosperity of Ireland, and without a satisfactory treatment of which the land question could never be settled. In this time of returning prosperity, when they were told that their exports were greater than they had ever been before, surely it was possible for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to find a sufficient sum of money to settle this question. He joined with his colleagues in pressing upon the Government the immediate necessity of dealing with the subject.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.) said he desired to join in congratulating the hon. Member for North Kilkenny upon the excellent maiden speech which he had just delivered. With regard to what had been said he was inclined to think that the hon. Member for North Fermanagh and his friends preferred the backstairs influence of Dublin Castle to secure appointments, to open criticism in Committee of Supply of the appointment and of the qualifications of the men who had been appointed subcommissioners. They all knew what had gone on ever since the Land Act of 1881 was passed, and they knew, above all, what had gone on during the past ten years of the Tory Government with regard to appointments in Ireland. If the archives of Dublin Castle could be searched, and if the correspondence which had passed between Lord Londonderry and the late Chief Secretary for Ireland could be perused, he thought they would be able to trace a number of those appointments to the influence of Lord Londonderry and Lord Donegal. Many of the public bodies in Ireland had passed resolutions against the appointment, under such influences, of men who were utterly unfit to give a fair decision with regard to rent fixing, and because they had done this they had incurred the indignation of the hon. Member for North Fermanagh and his colleagues. It was a very difficult thing to find men qualified for these positions who could be regarded as impartial arbiters between landlord and tenant. He would much prefer that the Irish Government should come over to England, Scotland, or Wales, and find Englishmen, Scotsmen, or Welshmen to perform the duty of fixing rents. It was the duty of the Irish Government to look very closely into the *personnel* of the Land Commission. He had had a long experience practising before the Land Commission, and no doubt it would be thought a delicate thing for him to criticise the members of that Commission. He had known the Chief Commissioner, who was appointed under the influence of a particular landowner, go down to the chief Commission Court and adjudicate upon the cases brought forward by tenants of the very landlord whose influence had secured him the appointment. That kind of thing had gone on all over the country. Mr. Justice Fitzgerald had for many year the duty of selecting sub-commissioners who had to fix the rents in the various parts of Ireland, and he could change them at any moment. Not only this, but he also had the duty assigned to him in consultation with Mr. Justice Meredith of selecting the tribunal to revise the decisions of those subcommissioners. He was not going to criticise Mr. Justice Fitzgerald, but the tenant farmers had the deepest mistrust of him in regard to the fixing of rents. No one doubted that that mistrust existed, and it was an outrage upon justice that a man who was so distrusted should first of all have the picking of the individual men to fix the rents on the sub-commission, and also the picking of the men who were to revise the rents of the men he had first selected. That was the position of things in Ireland to-day. The hon. Member for North Kilkenny had said that he should not deplore it if rent fixing were abolished altogether in Ireland, and he was of the same opinion, because the rent fixing tribunals were being used simply to keep up prices. The tenants could not go on much longer paying such high rents, the result of which was to make tham ready to snatch up anything in order to get relief. The system ought to be abolished root and branch. As a matter of fact, fifty of the sub-commissioners were described as tenant farmers. If their claims to call themselves tenant farmers were investigated, it would be found in most cases they had no proper right to be so designated. In making applications they naturally desired to put the best colour they could on their previous occupation, and, having done that, they obtained appointments by backstairs influences at the Castle. Hon. Members from Ulster who represented the landlord interest complained of the criticism which had been directed against the reappointments as unreasonable and unjust. They said in regard to these men who were removable that their appointments should be permanent, but they had not in the past said that the removable magistrates should hold permanent appointments. Why should they be so indignant because Sub-Commissioners were only appointed for one year? In the county he represented and a great many other counties in Ireland there was hardly any untenanted land to be acquired. That being so, how were the labourers to be provided for? He should be glad to see holdings enlarged, and he hoped the Chief Secretary would, in dealing with the untenanted land, assent to some of it being allotted to the labourers. When the Act of 1903 was passing through the House an Amendment was moved with the view of including the labourers in the benefits of the measure, but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, who was then Chief Secretary, intimated that he intended to deal with the labourers in the following year. On that promise the Amendment was withdrawn. The pledge had not yet been fulfilled, and he hoped that the Chief Secretary would deal with the matter in the forthcoming Bill. He knew cases in the counties of Limerick and Waterford where the labourers had taken strong measures to prevent people who held large quantities of land from getting portions of untenanted land. The labourers protested against farmers, who already had sufficient land, getting more; they wanted a little for themselves in order that they might be able to eke out a subsistence at periods of the year when they were unable to get employment from the farmers. He would point out one way in which untenanted land could be acquired under the Act of 1903. It was not contended that there was anything to prevent the Commissioners from buying land which was offered for sale in the open market. He knew of cases in Waterford where land was offered for sale in the open market, and he believed it could be acquired for a moderate sum. That land would be very useful for distribution among evicted tenants whose farms had been grabbed. There were several of these farms. The same remark applied to other lands in Leinster and Munster. He asked the Chief Secretary to direct the attention of the Commissioners to the Nugent Thomas estate in Waterford where the landlord had made his own brother the tenant of a large area of land. They held between them 2,000 acres of land from which a large number of tenants were evicted ten or fifteen years ago. The majority of the Judges had decided that the Land Commission might advance money to the brothers for the purpose of the acquisition of this land by one of them, and it was admitted that he became the tenant of the land for the purpose of buying the fee simple from his brother and paying for it with money borrowed from the Estates Commissioners. On this estate at the present moment there were at least five evicted tenants some of whose farms had been grabbed by outside persons and some by the person whose title to the land was in question fifteen years ago. He suggested that it should be represented to the Estates Commissioners that they ought not to countenance this and they should not deal with a case in which the brother of the landlord became the tenant of land which would otherwise be unoccupied and thereby oust the claim of the evicted tenants to return to the land. They ought not to advance the landlord any money so long as he held, or his brother held, this land which ought to be given back to the evicted tenants. He should like to refer to the subject of the purchase of their holdings by the tenants of town lands. The Estates Commissioners gave the owners of town lands, who were willing to sell, to understand that they could not see their way, considering the stringency of the conditions of the money market and the amount of money at their disposal, to make advances for the purpose of the purchase of these town holdings. He saw nothing in the Act itself, however, which compelled the Estates Commissioners to make any distinction at all between these town holdings and an estate which was mainly agricultural, and he hoped in future they would treat town tenants who applied for advances upon a different basis, and that they would make it clearly known to the owner of the land that they would have no hesitation in advancing money in the ordinary way to those tenants for the purchase of their holdings. Dealing with the question of returns he said that Mr. Porter who revised them was in a class by himself in the Land Commission. The returns were not altogether satisfactory, and as his hon. friend had said in the last fifteen years they did not show any great change; but what made the figures in them much higher was the froth of Mr. Porter. As a matter of fact the returns were not properly prepared. He knew some of the gentlemen who went round to the fairs, and he knew the class of men that they belonged to. They were striplings drawn from the landlord class, and they only went for their information to dealers in the best class of cattle and did not trouble about other dealers at all. Then they sent in reports to Mr. Porter and from them he prepared the returns. None of these young men were qualified for their positions, they did not know how to speak to a farmer, and none of the farmers would understand them because of their highly Anglicised accent. In order to be qualified they ought to be able to speak Irish, but he did not think that any one of these gentlemen had been within a stone's throw of an Irish-speaking peasant before his appointment. In regard to the zone system, he would like to refer to a case which excited the merriment of Mr. Justice Meredith. It was a case of a landlord who had one tenant, who was his sister-in-law; and when the Act of 1903 was passed they thought it was a good opportunity of getting some money. They made a judicial agreement the day before the Act came into operation, because under the zone system the Court might deal with tenants whose rents had been fixed by agreement at that time, and had never been decided in the Courts; and he himself knew of a great many cases that had come before the Commissioners where the tenants were induced to sign judicial agreements the day before the Act became operative. These agreements in no sense, however, dealt with judicial rents, but the landlord said to the tenant, "You must sign this agreement," and accordingly it was signed. The agreement he was dealing with between this landlord and his sister-in-law fixed the rent at £110, while the landlord was paying a rent of £104 to the head landlord. After three months a judicial agreement of this kind took effect and became absolute; but, unfortunately, these people were incautious, and did not wait the three months, but lodged an application for purchase at twenty-seven-and-a-half years purchase before the period expired. The Land Commissioners said that they were entitled to have the property inspected, and the inspector put the fair rent at £90. Then the Land Commissioners said they would not advance twenty-seven-and-a-half years purchase at £110, because they had lodged their application before the three months had expired; but they said they would advance twenty-seven-and-a-half years purchase at £90. That was about £2,500, and the landlord got a bonus on that of £300. This middleman, who was selling to his sister-in-law, had no interest at all, and the whole of the £2,500 went to redeem the head rent; but he got £300 out of the estate, because he had made this arrangement with his sister-in-law, and if they had waited for three months he would have got twenty-seven-and-a-half years purchase at £110 instead of at £90, and would have received £550 as a bonus. Mr. Justice Meredith referred to the case as one of the absurdities of the zone system, and that was a typical case of what occurred every day under that system.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.) said the hon. Member for North Fermanagh had tried to show that the Assistant Sub-Commissioners were selected because they were skilled in land values, and were likely to be impartial, but his hon. friend who had just sat down had, he thought, shown that they were neither impartial, judicial, nor competent. This debate had been initiated because the people of Ireland, having got rid of twenty years of Tory Government, and a Liberal Government being in power, expected, at least, that the men who fixed rents should be impartial; and that those whom the Tory Government appointed, and who after twenty years experience they found to be most unfair, inexperienced, and incompetent, should be replaced by men who should, at least, be fair, qualified, and competent. It was because the Chief Secretary had not been able during the short time that he had occupied his office to ascertain the enormities of the system under which these officials were appointed, and the wretched manner in which they had done their work, and had been unable to replace them by better men, that this subject was brought forward for discussion, and they trusted that in the near future the Chief Secretary would revise these appointments and appoint more competent men. Dealing with the evicted tenants, the hon. Member said he came from a district where 400 men had been turned out of their homes, and many of them had died. But some remained, and he had asked time after time since the passing of the Land Purchase Act of 1903 that something should be done to reinstate these men in their former holdings. So far, however, although two and a half years had passed since that Act came into operation, he did not know of one single tenant who had been replaced owing to its operation. It was true that some of the landlords themselves had replaced evicted tenants, but so far as he had been able to find, the Estates Commissioners had not done anything to reinstate the evicted tenants in the county of Kerry. He would advise the Chief Secretary to send down one of his best inspectors to the county to make inquiry into the large number of cases which now remained, and to see whether the landlords, though not inclined to sell the whole of their estates, would sell that part of the estate which an evicted tenant had held, and where a man had grabbed the land to see if he could not be induced to leave the holding and give it into the possession of the former holder. If the right hon. Gentleman would do that he would confer the greatest possible benefit upon the district and do something to allay the strong feeling which prevailed upon the subject. In his county there was very little untenanted land, and in the case of an evicted tenant whose holding was occupied by another there was considerable difficulty in settling his affairs.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara) said the hon. Member for Northampton had pointed out that the success of the various Land Acts depended a good deal upon their administration. He thought that that had been proved by the administration of the Land Act of 1903, which had not been in favour of the Irish tenant and which should not be satisfactory to the Members of this Committee. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had pointed out how, in Monaghan and in other parts of the North of Ireland, the Sub-Commissioners had been raising rents, but he wished to call attention to the method adopted by the Land Commissioners in the west of Ireland. He remembered a Commissioner after the passing of the Act of 1881 stating that it was astonishing that people should live in such wretched holdings as these people had. The Commissioner having expressed his astonishment at these people living on holdings of six or seven acres of rock and bog, for which they paid rents of from 15s. to 25s. an acre, in Kerry and Connemara, he the next day at the court house only reduced the rents by from 10 to 20 per cent. He admitted that if these people had these holdings for nothing they could not live out of them, and as a fact they did not. But his contention was that they were uneconomic holdings; that they were worthless and could not sustain life, and that the Commissioners if they acted justly should have reduced the rents by 75 or 80 per cent. The same spirit which actuated the Commissioners twenty years ago in fixing the rents in Connemara actuated them in the fixing of the rents all over Ireland. Until what was known as the western problem was solved the land question could not be settled. When in Galway during the general election, he saw on the counter of a village post office a pile of papers, and was told by the clerk that they were money orders from Great Britain and abroad sent by the friends and relatives to the people living on these wretched holdings; that no less than £5,000 a year reached that village in that way from Irish people who had been forced to leave their country. It was by money that came in that way that these people were enabled to pay their little debts and live upon their holdings. It was a monstrous shame and a scandal that the whole of the tenants on the western sea-board should have to pay £1 an acre for land that was not worth 1*s.*, and until some means was found of giving the millions of acres of grass lands now untenanted to the tenants the Irish land question would never be settled. The sooner the Government tackled this question the better it would be for themselves and the people of Ireland.

MR. BRYCE said he did not think that any one not acquainted with the jumble of legislation that formed the

Irish Land Acts and the large number of rules and regulations relating to their administration could appreciate the extreme difficulty of attempting to deal with all the points raised during the discussion and of presenting to English Members the points upon which reform was demanded. The difficulty to himself was increased by his short tenure of office. He really had not had time with all the work to be done in the House and arrears of reform in Ireland to make himself master of the details of land legislation and the present condition, and therefore he asked indulgence if he did not deal satisfactorily with all the points raised. He admitted the extreme importance and gravity of the subject, and rejoiced that instances had been brought forward to show deficiences in legislation or administration. But he must also observe that hon. Members seemed greatly to exaggerate the amount of power possessed by the Irish Executive; it was really very limited. One would think from the questions put in the House that it was in his power to be continually giving directions to the Land Commissioners and Estates Commissioners; but Parliament, rightly or wrongly—on the whole he thought rightly—had taken the matter from the Executive and inserted minute provisions in the Acts passed. Most of the points raised, or a large number, described as faults by the various speakers, were really points upon which the Legislature had given directions, and these it was not possible for the Executive or the Commissioners to override; they could only be varied by legislation. In the second place, these tribunals were entirely independent of the Executive, with specified statutory functions. He was entitled, of course, and constantly did so, to bring forward grievances or defects alleged to have arisen in administration and to ask them to go as far as possible to remedy them; but, even if he thought in his own mind that they were not taking the way to give effect to the intention of Parliament, he had no right to attempt to exercise any control. Therefore he begged hon. Members, especially English and Scottish Members, to understand that some of the charges alleged to be defects in the system were not defects with which the Irish Government had anything to do or could amend. Only one charge had been made against the action of the Irish Government, and with that he would deal, though he had not much to add to what he said a month ago. The charge on the one hand from Tory Members from Ireland was that he did not reappoint five temporary assistant Commissioners, and on the other hand from other Irish Members came the complaint that all but these five temporary assistant Commissioners were appointed. He would tell the Committee how he proceeded. Time was limited, and it was not possible to ascertain the merits of all the candidates. It would have been entirely wrong if he had judged by whom they were appointed or whether they had raised or lowered rents. That would have been to constitute himself a Court of Appeal from the assistant Commissioners with functions for which he was not qualified. Furthermore, if he had proceeded on the basis of whether an assistant Commissioner had raised or lowered rents, or if he had inquired who appointed or recommended him, he would have been departing from the principle that should guide a Minister. It would have been to indicate that because an appointment was made by one Government that appointment might be annulled by another, that a change of Government should mean a change of offices irrespective of the merits of holders of offices, and that would destroy public confidence in the Commission itself. He hoped the Committee would understand it was not upon any such basis he approached the question of appointments to the Commission. He endeavoured to ascertain the qualifications of the assistant Commissioners, and at the same time he had the qualifications of candidates who appeared most competent examined, and the result showed that some of the temporary assistant Commissioners—of whom he wished to say nothing disparaging—were not so competent, so experienced, so capable as some of the candidates, and accordingly those gentlemen who were less competent were not reappointed, and the more competent candidates were appointed in their place. He might perhaps have gone further and have superseded others; but at the same time he must entirely differ from hon. Gentlemen who had spoken of the temporary assistant Commissioners as being all partisans or incapable. There was no foundation for that charge being brought against the whole number.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said he had not spoken of the whole number, but he repeated that the majority were blind partisans.

MR. BRYCE said he was specially referring to the hon. Member, but, judging from the information that reached him, and he had not personal knowledge, it would not be true to say that a majority were blind partisans.

MR. FLAVIN asked if there was not one appointed after a landlord's recommendation.

MR. BRYCE said it was not possible for him to say, but that afforded no ground for dismissal; it was a matter of history. The hon. Member for South Tyrone suggested that there had been unwillingness to displease Ulster Tories, but the hon. Member must think him very simple if he supposed he hoped to conciliate them in any such way. No; the reason that moved him was the competency of one man more than another; but where a case was doubtful he thought the occupant was entitled to the benefit of the doubt, and, though he could not legally claim reappointment, if he was fairly competent and of long experience, he *prima facie* was entitled to the benefit of the doubt. He did not say that experience always made a man better. He remembered the case of an eminent counsel of whom it was said, when he was appointed a Judge, that he was not a very good Judge. One of his former friends at the Bar replied that he thought that with a little practice he would make the worst Judge on the Bench. But if a man was *prima facie* competent, he thought experience ought to count in his favour. The only possible principle on which to proceed was to endeavour to discover who were the best men, with the largest experience, the greatest capacity for judging land, and the most freedom from any kind of bias or partiality. It was quite possible that it would be necessary to make further changes. The temporary Commissioners had been appointed only for one year under an order issued by the Land Commission itself, which had his entire concurrence. As the year went on it would be his duty to study more and more carefully the competence and impartiality of those performing these important functions and to endeavour by degrees to bring the body of temporary Commissioners up to the highest possible point. But in doing that it would be necessary to retain the confidence on both sides in Ireland. A question had been put to him by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford on the subject of inspectors under the Land Purchase Acts. The Irish Government had selected one gentleman as an assistant Commissioner, two others to act as sub-inspectors, and six as inspectors in the matter of evicted tenants to negotiate for their restoration. All were men of practical experience and acknowledged competence and capacity. It was also contemplated to appoint some additional officers who the Estates Commissioners thought were wanted, and when the negotiations with the Treasury on the subject were complete he hoped to be able to make a further statement. It was said that a good deal of the delay in the land purchase system had been removed by having additional persons to do the work of examining titles. There was an additional Vote for them this year and there were now two first-class examiners at a higher salary and twelve at somewhat lower salaries. That was more than double the amount charged last year for that item, and it was hoped that, with the additional staff, the work of the Estates Commissioners would be greatly accelerated. He admitted that there had been some disappointment at the progress of land purchase, but difficulties had arisen which could not have been foreseen. He believed it would be possible, however, under the new arrangement to accelerate very much the working of the scheme. Some hon. Members had spoken severely of the judicial staff. He was very sorry to hear these things said about Judges; and he thought it was a little hard that Judges who had no opportunity of defending themselves, and who, as they did not know beforehand what cases would be criticised, could not supply him with material for their defence, should be subjected to this criticism. Mr. Justice Meredith was a man of the highest character.

Mr. O'SHEE denied that he had attacked the learned Judge.

Mr. MEAGHER said he also wished to say that he did not attack the Judge in question.

Mr. BRYCE said he was glad to have elicited from every Member who had spoken a disclaimer of anything but respect for Mr. Justice Meredith. As to the assessors, they were entirely outside the control of the Irish Government. They were appointed by the Judicial Commissioners with the consent of the Lord-Lieutenant, but the latter had no power to remove them. The Commissioners, however, had power to revise the list, and their revision also required the assent of the Lord-Lieutenant, and he could and would, if a new list was presented to him, scrutinise the names. Several Members had asked whether it was proper that rents should be raised on tenants' improvements. They ought not to be raised on tenants' improvements. Nothing was clearer than the intention of Parliament as to the assumption that improvements were made by the tenant; and, if he was put to the proof, sometimes difficult, and had his rent raised on his improvements in consequence, he should like to alter a system which he believed to be unjust and would take any means that might be in his power for doing so. With regard to the criticisms passed on the slow working of the Land Commission, it should be borne in mind that, when the Act of 1903 came into operation, a number of questions arose for judicial interpretation. There were many questions coming before the Estates Commissioners raising difficulties which had to be settled by the Judicial Commissioners. These difficulties having been now largely adjusted, he had every reason to believe that the work would go on at a much more rapid rate. The delay in purchasing congested estates had arisen from a most unfortunate blunder in the Act of 1903. A clause was inserted by the House of Lords which had practically the effect of tying the hands of the Estates Commissioners. The result was that they had been barred altogether in many cases from making any purchase because the loss incurred would be so high. He did not know how this could be remedied without legislation, but, if the Government were able to get legislation, this was one of the first things to be attended to. He could understand why the view was held that the land purchase prices were too high. The only answer he could make by way of explanation, if not of consolation, was that the tenant was more apt than before to pay prices which many would think to be exorbitant because the time for redemption was much longer, and he grasped at this relief. Complaint was made that not enough had been done for the evicted tenants. That was perfectly true. The provision regarding them was one of the most important of the Act of 1903, and it was the prospect of relief to these tenants that made hon. Members accept some things in the Act which they would not otherwise have accepted. He said this not for any purpose of recrimination. There was nobody on the Front Bench opposite at the moment to hear recrimination.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.) asked what the right hon. Gentleman meant by relief to the evicted tenants.

Mr. BRYCE said he was coming to that. He was now endeavouring to explain why relief had been retarded. It was owing to two regulations made by the late Government. By the first it was held that the evicted tenants could only be reinstated by operations in connection with the estate from which they had been evicted; and by the second it was held that the Estates Commissioners could not buy untenanted land apart from the purchase of tenanted estates. This prevented the Commissioners from getting hold of land on which to put the tenants who could not be restored to land from which they had been evicted. The present Government cancelled these regulations altogether, and set free the hands of the Estates Commissioners. When so many criticisms were passed it was fair to remember that one of the first things the Government did was to endeavour to accelerate these operations. A further step taken was the provision of additional staff for the purpose of dealing with the evicted tenants and allowing the process of restoration to go on. He heartily sympathised with the view that the acceleration of the land purchase scheme was perhaps the most important thing to which the efforts of the Irish Government should be directed—next, of course, to the reorganisation altogether of the Government of Ireland. The Irish Government could not do much, but it had already done something. There were two particular objects to be kept in view by the Estates Commissioners—the restoration of the evicted tenants and the creation of small arable tenancies. The existence of evicted tenants had been one of the very greatest evils in Ireland. According to figures which he had recently seen, the number of tenants evicted between 1849 and 1882 exceeded 2,000,000. There had been no case of human suffering and hardship within memory which ought more to touch the heart than the case of the evicted tenants. Remembering the way in which these people were turned out of their homes after the famine, many of them left to starve, and many obliged to beg their way round the country until they could get off to America, he was astonished that past generations should have been able to look on with so much composure. That was why they were bound to do all that they could for those evicted tenants who remained. There was nothing which would conduce more to the social peace and order of Ireland than the restoration of the evicted tenants, who had been centres of discontent and of a sense of injustice wherever they had gone. He hoped that under the new arrangements the Estate Commissioners would be able to see an end to this question within a very few years. [NATIONALIST cries of "Months."] He did not wish to be too sanguine, but at any rate within the life of the present Parliament. [Cries of "Oh."] The other object to which he hoped the Estates Commissioners would specially direct their attention was the creation of small arable farms. Much had been said about the desirability of cutting up the large grazing farms—many of them of rich soil—and of setting people to till the land in places where it was formerly tilled and supported an industrial population. It was true that in the past many of the holdings were too small and were uneconomic. He did not desire to restore the condition of things existing before the famine. The attempt must be to settle people in tenancies large enough to enable them to live in decency and comfort according to the higher standards of the present day. But in some cases the soil was so rich that, with additional facilities for reaching market, the position of a tenant with twenty or forty acres would be incomparably better than, and he would belong to a different social class from, the same tenant in the days before the famine. There used to be an economic school that considered that because the tendency had been to substitute grazing for arable farms, that tendency ought not to be interfered with. He did not believe that that was true, even on economic grounds. Taking into account the stimulus to industry and thrift, which was given by the possession not only of land, but of a holding on which it was possible to live in comfort and decency, it was possible to get far better results than were obtained by the present system of grazing farms. The change would be very greatly for the benfit of the country as a whole. It was a dismal thing for a country to see itself steadily depopulated not only by eviction, but by the turning of arable into grazing farms. In thirty years much more than a million acres had passed from arable to grazing. That process he wished to stop, and nothing would be more in the interest of Ireland than that these rich lands in the west should be settled with people holding farms of twenty or forty acres. The stoppage of emigration and the encouragement of the people were political objects of the highest possible moment; and he pledged the Government to do all they could to make the people of Ireland owners of their own land, to reduce the sufferings of those who had hitherto suffered from having uneconomically small holdings, and to replace in Ireland —or rather to place in Ireland for the first time—a prosperous industrial population.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said that it was not an agreeable task to find fault with the right hon. Gentleman so early; but the Irish members would not be doing their duty if they did not let him know the feelings of the people with respect to certain administrative acts in Ireland. He must express his own great satisfaction at some of the announcements which the right hon. Gentleman had made. But when the Chief Secretary spoke of years being occupied in the settlement of the evicted tenants' difficulty he did much to dash the pleasurable hopes which the other part of his announcement had created. The Irish Members were convinced that the whole business could be completed within one year, and the bulk of the tenants could be reinstated within six months.

MR. BRYCE: I said that, having heard of the difficulties sometimes experienced in getting the particular piece of land the tenant desired, I did not want to raise false hopes. If it can be done within the year, so much the better.

MR. DILLON was quite content if the right hon. Gentleman would throw himself into that work, as he knew he would, in the spirit of the speech he had just made. There was one other announcement which the right hon. Gentleman had made which was extremely gratifying and that was that a sub-commissioner had been appointed specially to take charge of the estates which were to be purchased for division amongst small farmers. He would now turn to some points in regard to which they had to find fault with the administration. The reappointment of the temporary Assistant Commissioners could not be regarded as satisfactory. The hon. Member for Waterford did not contend that Civil Servants should change with a change of Government. These men were in no sense permanent Civil Servants. They were men appointed temporarily for a specific job, and were allowed to retain their ordinary means of living. The Commission set up for fixing rents was no ordinary Commission. The Commissioners had to deal with the means of existence of a whole people. They had to adjudicate between an aristocratic landowning class, who for generations had maintained a hold upon the government of Ireland, and a poor, persecuted, and impoverished tenantry. In that conflict, which was one of life and death, all the advantages lay with the landowning class. They had all the social influences that wealth could secure, they had the best legal advice, and even if the tribunal was a fair one all the advantages lay with the landowning classes. But what had been the history of that tribunal? For the first five years after it was instituted whilst the Government of Mr. Gladstone remained in office an unsuccessful attempt was made to hold the scales evenly. In the year 1886 the Liberal Government disappeared from power, and practically speaking, for an unbroken period of twenty years the whole control of Irish government passed into the hands of the Tory Party and the landlord class. Without the smallest pretext, and without endeavouring to maintain a shred of decency, that Commission had been packed against the tenants in the most barefaced way. Every one of these sub-Commissioners had been the nominee of a landlord or some agent of the Tory Party. In many cases they had been bailiffs or hangers-on to one of the great houses in Ireland, and came with letters of recommendation from the Duke of Abercorn or the Duke of Devonshire. How could these men be impartial to the tenants? It was said that the fixing of rents had ceased to be a subject of importance. That was not correct, for as long as purchase was in process the fixing of rents became more important than ever. In the past, rents were fixed for fifteen years, but now the rent of the tenant fixed the price of his holding. There had also been a serious increase in the price of land in Ireland. It was unnatural, forced, and based on no improvement in the profits of farming. Within one year the price of land had risen from a general average of eighteen years purchase of all rents, paid in depreciated land stock at about £90, to twenty-three-and-a-half years paid in cash, with a bonus of 12 per cent. added. This rise was purely artificial and was due to three causes, all dangerous to the stability of land purchase—(1) the operation of the zones abolishing inspection; (2) the extension of the term for redemption; and (3) the temptation offered to the landlords to put on pressure by proceeding for arrears of rent and then calling on the tenants to sign an agreement for an excessive price. Why did that temptation arise under the new system? Because under the old system of the Ashbourne Acts there was a Government inspection, and the landlord had no temptation to squeeze out of the tenant a higher price. This system of pressing the tenant by suing for arrears had become a danger not only to the future prosperity of the tenant but also to the security of the State. The process of fixing fair rents was more important than ever, and therefore it was that they felt deeply aggrieved that the right hon. Gentleman did not take advantage of the opportunity he had the other day of making a substantial step towards giving an impartial tribunal in Ireland, which would command the confidence of all classes. In analysing the composition of the body reappointed by the right hon. Gentleman as temporary Commissioners for the fixing of rents the first test to apply was the religious test. The population in Ireland connected with agriculture was composed in the proportion of six to one of Roman Catholics, whereas the land-owning class were in the proportion of five to one of Protestants. The tenant and labouring classes were ten to one Roman Catholic; so that if the Commissioners had been selected impartially the proportion should have been six or four Roman Catholics to one Protestant. But the Commissioners had been selected because they could be relied on as being the friends of one class. Twenty-two sub-Commissioners were reappointed by the right hon. Gentleman, and if they had been selected impartially there should have been six Roman Catholics to one Protestant. But there were, as a matter of fact, seventeen Protestants to five Roman Catholics, and these Roman Catholics were either land agents or landlords. The assessors, who sat in the Court of Appeal and reversed the decisions of two sub-Commissioners, were the *crême de la crême* of partisans. There were nine assessors, of whom six were Protestants and three were Catholics. The three Catholics were respectively a grazier, a landlord and barrister, and a land agent. This was what the right hon. Gentleman called impartiality. In Ireland the permanent officials—the Civil Servants of the Crown—were almost to a man Tories. During the past twenty years the Tory Government had staffed the public service with partisans of their own. Tories were not so tender in their consciences as Liberals; that was one of the troubles of his life. He had passed through many vicissitudes of Tory and Liberal Governments, and he had always found that a Liberal Government suffered from what was called—he did not use the term in any invidious sense—the nonconformist conscience. Tories were never troubled with "nonconformist conscience." They acted on business principles. The right hon. Gentleman had given an explanation of why he could not interfere with the assessors. They were an important body of men set up by the Act of 1903, to make the whole system steel clad. These partisans, sitting with the Judicial Commissioner in appeal cases, could reverse the judgments of two skilled sub-Commissioners. Mr. Commissioner Fitzgerald admitted before a Royal Commission that he knew nothing at all about the value of land. The whole of this business was a humbug and a fraud. The appointment of Judge Meredith straight from being the standing counsel of the landlords to be the head of the Land Commission was a glaring and gross scandal. There was no greater partisan than Mr. Commissioner Fitzgerald. He had packed his Court and arrogated to himself a power for which he believed there was no legal sanction, and he harried and worried the sub-Commissioners until they did his will. They were justified in looking to the Government, from whom they certainly did expect some consideration for Irish ideas and for their poor people, who had groaned for years, almost for generations, under the worst form of government, the government of the ascendency class, and in hoping that the right hon. Gentleman would show strength and courage and not allow his conscience to have such domination over him. Twelve thousand appeals were pending. God knew when they would be heard. The average time in which they could get an appeal heard was four years. But sometimes they were expedited. The case of the Marquess of Downshire was an instance in point. He was trying to screw up the poor part of his estate to twenty-three and a half years' purchase. The tenants were refusing to pay. They had gone into the Land Court in 1902 and had got very substantial reductions. Down came the Appeal Court, last month, and one of the assessors, accompanied by Mr. Meredith. They went over the rents which had been settled four years ago, and obliged the Marquess of Downshire by raising eleven of the rents, confirming three, and reducing none. They would not get the Irish people to believe that that was conscience or fair play. He assured the Chief Secretary that there was bitter disappointment and anger in Ireland over this proceeding, and they hoped and trusted it would not be repeated in the future.

*MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.) said the speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo gave the Committee an insight into the ways and manners of the United Irish League. A highly judicial department had been characterised as "a fraud" by one of the leaders of the Nationalist Party. The Chief Secretary had a most difficult duty to discharge when so many conflicting interests were arrayed against him. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on his speech in which he had got over the difficult and delicate points with great diplomacy. He congratulated him also on the promise he had given with respect to expediting the examination of titles. The trouble arising in that connection had been the cause of much of the congestion of which they had been complaining. He hoped the result of the arrangements which had been promised would be to expedite substantially the work of land purchase. The Act of 1903 had been one of the most beneficial ever placed on the statute book. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: For the landlords.] He represented an agricultural constituency, and it was not difficult to see a marked improvement in the prosperity of the farming industry as the result of the security of tenure which was now enjoyed by many of the tenant farmers. It was because he was anxious to see the number of tenant proprietors steadily increased that he rejoiced in the announcement made by the Chief Secretary to-night. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had criticised the work of the Land Commissioners. He could assure the Committee that in the opinion of his constituents they performed their onerous and highly judicial duties in a careful and satisfactory manner.

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

EDUCATION OF DEFECTIVE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Adjourned at five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 4th May, 1906

The Lord Silchester (*E. Longford*)—Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Huddersfield Corporation; Carlisle Corporation; Todmorden Corporation; Great Eastern Railway; Bacup Corporation; Cardiff Gas; North East Lincolnshire Water; Thornton Urban District Gas; New Mills Urban District Council; Uxbridge Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Shrewsbury Corporation Water Bill; Poole Corporation Water Bill. The order of Tuesday last referring the Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders to the Standing Orders Committee, discharged.

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Bury Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Electric Supply) Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 12th of March and 3rd of April last, discharged, and Bill committed.

County of Durham Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 12th of March and 3rd of April last, discharged, and Bill committed.

Newport Harbour Commissioners Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 19th of March and the 3rd of April last, discharged, and Bill committed.

Watford Gas Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1.) Bill [H.L.]; Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Kesteven, etc.) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a (according to order).

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of maintenance of existing religious teaching in Church of England schools of—

Parents and guardians of children attending schools at Bolton, Holy Trinity—Accrington, St. John's.

Teachers in a school at Accrington, St. John's. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (BUILDING BYE-LAWS) BILL. [H.L.]

Petition in favour of; of Royal Sanitary Institute. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS.)

Statement showing number of voluntary schools on 1st January, 1906 in urban areas with a population of 5,000 and over in England and Wales respectively, and their average attendance for statistical year ended 31st July, 1904, with approximate percentages to the total number and average attendance of all the voluntary schools in England and Wales for the same period.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade.

I. Authorising the construction of Light Railways in the county of Lincoln from Blyton to Frodingham; urban districts of Enfield and Edmonton in the county of Middlesex; urban district of Cheshunt in the county of Hertford; county of Somerset from Blagdon to Pensford.

II. Authorising a deviation in the parish of Swadlingcote in the urban district of Swadlingcote district in the county of Derby, of a part of Railway (No. 1), authorised by the Burton and Ashby Light Railway Order, 1903.

III. Authorising the working of branch lines of the North Staffordshire Railway as light railways under the Light Railways Act, 1896.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

RATEABLE HEREDITAMENTS.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: My Lords, I need not occupy much time in asking the House to agree to the Return asked for in my Motion because, as your Lordships will naturally suppose, I approached the Local Government Board to find out whether there would be any objection to it. It is really intended to be in supplement and in continuation of a Return which I moved for some five or six years ago, at the time when I was Chairman of the Local Taxation Commission. At first I thought it would be desirable to have that Return brought up to date, but the communications which I received from the Local Government Board convinced me that it would be unduly costly—costly out of proportion to any good that would be gained—to ask for that; and therefore I have put the Motion on the Paper in an amended form.

I take this opportunity of acknowledging the courtesy with which my representations were received by the Local Government Board, and I hope to hear, as I believe I shall, that there is no objection to this Return. The Return I asked for five years ago set out, in respect of each union, the value of all kinds of property assessed for the poor rate, dividing them into lands, buildings, railways, and other sub-divisions. I have ascertained that there is a Return presented every year under the Acts of 1862 and 1897 known as the Annual Local Taxation Return, and all that I ask is that there should be a small supplementary Return dividing one of the columns which appears in that Return—namely, the one which gives the annual value of hereditaments—and showing the value respectively of railways and other properties separated one from the other.

I think that perhaps few of your Lordships realise the importance of this in respect of the greatly increasing amount at which railways are being annually assessed for local purposes. Last year railways contributed nearly £5,000,000 to local taxation, and so far as I can gather, the increase has been very rapid in the last two or three years. I believe that in the last three years the increase amounted each year to £250,000 or £300,000. To some extent this must arise from the opening of new railways and the like, but the increase is very alarming to those who are interested in railway property. I think it extremely desirable that the full facts should be made known, and I believe that the preparation and publication of this Return will aid in that object.

Moved, "That there be laid before the House a Return showing for each union in England and Wales (*a*) the gross estimated rental, and (*b*) the rateable value in 1899 and in 1906 of (i) All rateable hereditaments, and (ii.) railways included in (i.) (the term 'railways' to include stations and depôts)."—*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, in reply to the noble Lord, I have to say that my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board will be very glad to meet the noble Lord's wishes. The Return which he asks for will be prepared with the least possible delay.

On Question, agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

POPLAR BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH, who had given notice "To ask His Majesty's Government whether the Local Government Board have ordered an inquiry into the administration and expenditure of the Board of Guardians of Poplar Union; and, if so, what is the nature of the inquiry, and what are the instructions under which it is being held; and whether adequate opportunity will be given to any ratepayer to appear at this inquiry, and to give such information germane to the inquiry which he may wish to supply," said: My Lords, the notice which I have placed upon the Paper really consists of three Questions, but, of course, the last Question is by far the most important. I have every reason to believe than an inquiry of some sort has been ordered, but I have been unable to ascertain exactly what inquiry it is, and some friends of mine who are interested locally in the expenditure of Poplar have also been unable to get the information for which I ask.

I do not wish to bring any general charge of wasteful or extravagant expenditure against the Poplar Board of Guardians, but the facts and figures as published seem to me to show a very strong *prima facie* case in that direction. I think it obviously desirable that by some means or another, before some impartial tribunal, the precise facts should be made known, as well as all the difficulties with which the guardians of such a union as Poplar must necessarily have to contend. I should be very sorry indeed if, in putting this Question, I were supposed to be hostile to the granting of any fair assistance or relief to boards of guardians in the East End of London who have great difficulties to cope with, but I do attach the very greatest possible importance to this, that if relief is to be given, either by equalisation of rates over the Metropolis or in any other way, the greatest care should be taken to see that the soundest possible principles of administration are observed, and that every reasonable premium in favour of economy is put before those responsible for local administration.

I quite admit that one or several tests taken by themselves may not carry conviction of a charge of wasteful or extravagant administration. For instance, in some unions the proportion of paupers to the population is very much larger than in others. In some cases expenditure rises rapidly, and, taken by themselves, these tests, as I have said, are not conclusive. But, when you find almost every known test which can be applied tending in the same direction, then I must say I think there is a very strong *prima facie* case made out for extravagance of administration. In the absence of information which can only be got by such an inquiry as I hope will be instituted, one is thrown back upon published figures.

In Poplar it is the case at the present time that one out of every sixteen of the population is in receipt of Poor Law relief in some form or other; and, if you take the cost of expenditure during the last three or four years, it is shown that since 1901 the actual increase of cost per head per week of the indoor paupers has risen by two shillings—a very alarming increase. The rates are 12s. in the £ and the actual cost of out-door paupers alone has risen from £16,000 in 1901 to £35,000 in 1905. Now, these facts taken together seem to me to establish a *prima facie* case that there is something very wrong with the administration. But the case does not stop there, because one can make comparisons with other unions in the immediate neighbourhood of Poplar, which, although it may possibly be said that none of them are individually so poor as Poplar, still cannot be very different in degree. If I take the Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, St. George's, Stepney, and Mile End Unions and add together the populations I find that the total is 539,044 individuals. In the whole of those six unions there were, in 1906, only some 3,000 paupers, whereas, turning to Poplar, with a population of 169,000, I find that in the same year there were nearly 7,000 paupers.

The matter does not even stop there, because the course of events is even more instructive. If it could be said that Poplar had been subject to some sudden emergency of distress perhaps a palliative case could be made out, but Poplar cannot be affected differently from all these other unions, and the course of the history of the other unions has been this. In 1901 there were 2,364 paupers in the six unions I have mentioned. In 1905 they numbered 2,860, or an increase of 500. The increase in Poplar was from 3,481 to 7,384. It seems to me practically certain, on these figures, that there must be something wrong.

I think myself that the facts as to the various classes of property in Poplar perhaps account for that administration to some extent. We are likely to have, I understand, a discussion on the vexed and difficult question of compounding in this House early next week, and I do not wish to trespass on what will be said then, but those of your Lordships who know anything about local administration will appreciate the gravity of these facts. The total rateable value of Poplar is £830,000. Now £370,000 of that rateable value carries no vote or qualification to stand for the board of guardians; £370,000 is the rateable value of public works in respect of which no one is qualified to sit or to take part in local administration. Of the remaining £460,000 only £170,000 is in subjects above £20 annual value, so that £290,000, being under £20 of annual value, is the subject of the vicious system of compounding, and the dwellers in those houses have no first-hand knowledge whatever of what they pay for local administration. Your Lordships, of course, know that the system of compounding makes a certain amount of allowance to the landlord for the collection of the rates, and I think it will show to what extent this vicious system has been carried when I tell you that last year the system of compounding cost the Poplar ratepayers no less than £37,648, or a rate of nearly 1s. in the £ on the whole rateable value of the union. So much for Poor Law matters.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh.

A correspondent has informed me that in the matter of pauper schools there is very grave reason for thinking that the Poplar Guardians have been guilty of considerable extravagance. They have, as I am informed, taken land for their schools at £100 an acre, while I am told much cheaper land quite as suitable could have been obtained close by. My informant says that the internal fittings of the schools are on a most extravagant scale, and he goes so far as to say that £50,000 might have been saved in the fitting up of that one building alone. I am told that the engineering work, amounting to £25,000, was given out without the slightest attempt to make a contract, and that it was not the subject of a contract at all. The general fitting of the school building is described as being a long way ahead of any public school such as Eton or Harrow. The staircase is of teak, the swimming bath as good as any in London, and I am told that the roof beam in the boys' dining-room would not disgrace the finest cathedral in England.

There may be justification for these things, but what I ask your Lordships is this—With a rate of 12s. in the £, can the unfortunate people of Poplar afford these luxuries? Just think who it is who has to pay for them. I do not know whether the owners of the public works will get much sympathy from your Lordships, but the people I plead for against this form of local extravagance are those unfortunate people who are just able to keep their heads above water and no more. They have to pay. It may be concealed from them in the vicious system of compounding, and they may think that all they pay the landlord goes in rent, but for every pound which is drawn from them they have to find so many shillings a week for local adminstration. It does not tend to sound administration that the system of compounding should be allowed to go to such an extent as I have described, because it does not seem to the people who can control it that they are really being made to pay.

The reason I am anxious about the inquiry is this. I am informed that the board of guardians have not taken the steps they ought to take to make known the periodical audit of their accounts. I know that so far as Scotland is concerned, when there is to be an audit of the accounts of any local body the date is advertised, and I was under the impression that the same salutary rule held good in England. I am quite certain it ought to be so, and that every ratepayer ought to have an opportunity of appearing before the auditor to examine the accounts of those who are administering his affairs. I am told that the notice on the occasion of the last audit of the Poplar board of guardians was posted only in the hall of the board of guardians and in the workhouse, and that there was no other public advertisement of any kind.

I am glad to be able to say that those who are interested locally in the expenditure of Poplar are moving in the matter. They have formed an association which is strong enough to represent the facts before any impartial inquiry which may be appointed by the Local Government Board. The point which I chiefly want to press upon those responsible for the management of the Local Government Board at the present time is that the facts which I have disclosed do provide at any rate a strong *prima facie* case for a thorough and impartial inquiry. If there are difficulties so great in Poplar that this expenditure is justifiable, it seems to me very desirable that they should be made known; but if, on the other hand, there has been extravagance, it is at least of equal public importance that the actual facts should be disclosed. That, I believe, can only be done by means of an inquiry under a tribunal as impartial and as strong as I believe the Local Government Board to be.

EARL CARRINGTON: My Lords, the House will, I am sure, readily understand and applaud the reasons which have induced the noble Lord to bring this most important matter before the House, but I would very respectfully ask the House not to prejudge the case, because the noble Lord has brought forward some statements from an unknown correspondent, which he calls facts. I respectfully submit that they are, after all, only allegations, and that by going into such details you will prejudge the case. Attention has been drawn in various quarters to the extent of pauperism in the Poplar Union, and the financial position of the union, and other matters affecting the relief of the poor therein, and the President of the Local Government Board thought it desirable to direct Mr. Davy, the chief general inspector of the Board, to inquire and report as regards the general, industrial and financial conditions of the union, its pauperism, and the administration of the guardians and their officers. Mr. Davy is now engaged on these investigations. Representations have, no doubt, been made by the guardians and other bodies that a public inquiry should be held, at which the ratepayers should be heard, and that is what I understand the noble Lord opposite desires. But the President—and I think the noble Lord will agree with me that he was wise in that decision—has reserved the decision of this question until Mr. Davis' preliminary inspection is completed, and that will shortly be the case. I shall be happy if I can be of service to the noble Lord in giving him any information he desires.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I thank the noble Lord for the courtesy of his Answer, but I would point out that he has failed to reply to my third Question—namely, whether Mr. Davy, under his instructions, will be bound to hear and consider any representation which is made to him by those locally interested.

EARL CARRINGTON: I thought I had answered that Question. The President of the Local Government Board has reserved his decision on that point until Mr. Davy's preliminary inspection is completed, and that will shortly be the case. I can assure the noble Lord that there will be no unnecessary delay, and that every publicity will be given which the noble Lord could possibly desire.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN SCHOOLS.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, in rising to move for the Return which I have put down on the Paper in fulfilment of the promise I made to the most rev. Primate, there is no need for me to go over again the ground I traversed yesterday, when I attempted to explain the form which the Return, in our opinion, ought to take. There is only one point on which I wish to say a word. Sub-head (4) inquires for any information now in the possession of the local education authority as to the religious instruction, other than that under its own regulations or syllabus, given in individual council schools. The most rev. Primate was anxious that it should be made perfectly clear that that information would include a report as to any schools within their knowledge where no religious instruction of any kind was given. We do not see our way to alter the form of the Return for the reasons which I stated yesterday; but I have arranged that to the circulars to be issued to the local education authorities a note will be added making it quite clear that that information, where they possess it, is to be supplied. It was always the intention of this subhead that that information should, where possible, be included, but as the most rev. Primate wishes it to be made more clear, he can take it from me that the addition will be made in the form of a note in the circular issued to the local education authorities.

Moved, "That there be laid before the House, a Return showing in respect of each Local Education Authority in England and Wales under Part III. of the Education Act, 1902—

1. The Regulations or Syllabus for Religious Instruction put forth for the use of its Council Schools, and the date on which they were issued;

2. In the absence of such Regulations or Syllabus, any Resolution of the Authority on the subject, and its date;

3. Whether the Authority leaves Individual Council Schools free to depart from the Regulations or Syllabus;

4. Any information now in the possession of the Local Education Authority as to the Religious Instruction, other than that under its own Regulations or Syllabus, given in individual Council Schools;

5. What arrangements the Local Authority makes for the inspection of the Religious Instruction in its Council Schools."—(*The Lord President.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

SOLICITORS' BILL. [H.L.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD ALVERSTONE: My Lords, I shall not detain your Lordships more than a few moments in stating the objects of this Bill. Up till a few years ago it was supposed that there was a discretion as to granting certificates to solicitors under certain circumstances, but owing to a decision of the Court of Appeal in 1901 it was found that there was no discretion at all in the case of bankrupt solicitors, and the result is that there are upwards of seventy undischarged bankrupts now practising as solicitors. Under the Act of 1888 the Master of the Rolls has discretion in cases where a certificate has been suspended or not taken out for a period of twelve months; and this Bill simply provides, not that a solicitor who is an undischarged bankrupt may not practise, but that he shall only do so where the Master of the Rolls thinks fit to give him a certificate. There may be cases where, having regard to the circumstances of his bankruptcy, it is right that the solicitor should be allowed to practise; but there may be other cases where it would not be right that he should do so. This Bill has passed your Lordships' House on two occasions, and last year it was a Government measure in the other House. It has been felt for some time that there ought to be a discretion such as is given in this Bill, and I ask your Lordships to give the Bill a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Alverstone.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, the object of this Bill is simply to extend the provisions of Section 4 of the Post Office (Money Orders) Act of 1883, which allows an interchange of postal orders between this country and our Colonies and British possessions. The object of this new Bill is to sanction an interchange between any foreign State and Egypt and any other of our British protectorates. The Bill is especially framed with regard to our African protectorates. It has already passed the House of Commons without opposition, and I trust your Lordships will see your way to read it a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^{a} (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (BUILDING BYE-LAWS) BILL. [H.L].

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

LORD HYLTON: My Lords, I understand that the Local Government Board are anxious to put down one or two small drafting Amendments which are not quite ready. I beg, therefore, to ask your Lordships to allow me to postpone the Motion for the Third Reading of this Bill till Thursday next.

Order for the Third Reading, by leave of the House, postponed.

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL.

Amendments reported (according to Order); and Bill to be read 3^{a} on Monday next.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 4th May, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Cathcart District Railway (Superfluous Lands) Order Confirmation Bill; North Berwick Corporation Order Confimation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Marriages Provisional Order Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Arlecdon and Frizington, Liverpool, and Marsden," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Mr. John Burns; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 190.]

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 6) Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to Smethwick," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Mr. John Burns; read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 191.]

Mid-Oxfordshire Gas Bill. Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table.

St. Pancras Electricity Bill. Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation Bill [Lords]. Reported without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill to be read the third time.

Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

ALLOTMENTS (LONDON) BILL.

Petition from West Norwich, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Chidswell and Shawcross; Harrington Pits; St. Helen's; South Derbyshire; Topcliffe; and Wollescote Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Balderstone; Barnsley; Belton; Biddisham; Birmingham (two); Bishops Sutton; Brighton (three); Brindle; Bush Hill; Bush Hill Park; Carnforth; Cheadle; Chequerbent; Clay Hill; Disley; Durley (two); Eaton; Edmonton; Enfield (four); Enfield Highway; Eton Wick; Farnham (two); Farnworth (three); Foots Cray and Chislehurst (two); Forty Hill (two); Friern Barnet; Handforth; Hastings (five); Haverfordwest (two); Hawkley (two); Heptonstall and Hepden Bridge; Higher Sutton; Hinton Ampner; Holmfirth (three); Hulme Watfield; Hulton; Hunwick (two); Kelloe; Kilmeston with Beanworth (two); Kirkdale; Lambeth; Lane End (two); Lanteglos-by-Fowey; Llanddewi Rhydderch; Macclesfield (three); Manchester; Mathry (two); Medstead; Minwear and Newton Norton; Moreton-cum-Alcumlow; Newbold Astbury (two); Peniston (three); Pilton; Preston (Sussex) (two); Privett (two); Reddish (two); Ripponden; Rowledge; St. Nicholas; Silver Hill; Slebech (two); Sowerby; Stoneygate (two); Sunderland; Sutton; The Lickey; Toxteth Park; Tretower (two); Waltham Cross (two); Wield; Wilmslow (three); Winch; Winchmore Hill; and Wythal; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Greenock, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petition from Westgate and Sleaford, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

WAGES BOARDS BILL.

Petition of the Personal Rights Association, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TREES (IRELAND).

Return [presented May 3rd] to be printed. [No. 157.)

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Urban District Council of Rhondda, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Barbers' Shops within the District [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY RETURNS (PRELIMINARY STATEMENT).

Copy presented, of Return relating to the Railways of the United Kingdom for the year 1905 (Preliminary Statement) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising a deviation in the parish of Swadlincote, in the urban district of Swadlincote District, in the county of Derby, of a part of Railway No. 1 authorised by the Burton and Ashby Light Railway Order, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Somerset from Blagdon to Pensford [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Lincoln from Blyton to Frodingham [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the urban district of Cheshunt, in the county of Hertford [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the urban districts of Enfield and Edmonton, in the county of Middlesex [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the working of Branch Lines of the North Staffordshire Railway as Light Railways under The Light Railways Act, 1896 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Purchase of the Estate of Charles D. O'Rorke, near Tuam, County Galway.

MR. HAZLETON (Galway, N): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the case of the estate of Charles D. O'Rorke, near Tuam, county Galway, for twenty-five years in the Land Court, he is aware that the tenants made an offer to purchase twelve months ago, and that they increased their offer by one year's purchase at the request of the receiver; and, if so, can he state the reason why the tenants have had no further information on the subject of the sale for the past year.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have no information as to any negotiations between the tenants and the receiver. The Estates Commissioners, however, inform me that they are negotiating for the purchase of the estate, which comprises some 1,200 acres in the occupation of 61 tenants and about 700 acres of untenanted land, and is for sale in the Land Judge's Court. On the 21st February last a conditional offer was made to the Land Judge, but on the 22nd March last the Commissioners were informed by the Land Judge's Registrar that their offer for the untenanted portion of the estate was considered below its value, and the Commissioners were asked to reconsider their Estimate. The matter will be duly reconsidered by the Commissioners.

Grazing Land on the Golding Estate.

MR. HAZLETON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what the Estates Commissioners propose to do with the 300 acres of grazing land on the Golding Estate, near Headford, county Galway, which has been purchased by them; whether they will enlarge uneconomic holdings in the district and allot portions of the land in question to local residents with capital enough to stock portions allotted to them.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that negotiations for the sale to them of the estate in question have been instituted by the owner, but that they have not yet acquired the same. If they should purchase the estate they will, when distributing the untenanted land, have due regard to the wants and circumstances of persons resident in the neighbourhood.

Malarial Fever.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask the under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can grant a Return showing the measures taken in the Crown Colonies and Protectorates to eradicate malarial fever, and the results as shown by the health satistics of the inhabitants.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The hon. Member's wish has been noted, and the Secretary of State is instructing the Advisory Board for the Tropical Disease Research Fund to consider how it can best be met.

Discipline of the Navy.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Board are willing to try the experiment in one fleet or squadron of dispensing altogether with ship's police, and rely for the maintenance of discipline for one year on the petty officers and non-commissioned officer ratings, the results being then compared with those obtained in other fleets, with the view to the total abolition of the police force afloat.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Board have under consideration certain proposals concerning the duties of petty officers which will affect the present regulations as to the employment of ship's police, and in the meanwhile it is not proposed to act on the suggestion of the hon. Member.

Duties of the Lord President of the Council.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can specify the official duties of the Lord President of the Council.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Lord President is responsible for the whole business of the Privy Council Office which, besides affairs connected with the holding of Councils, the issue of Proclamations and Orders in Council, and a variety of other matters, includes questions arising out of the administration and Amendment of the Medical Acts, the Pharmacy Acts, the Midwives Act, and other Acts of Parliament, the grant of Charters and consideration of Schemes under the Municipal Corporations Acts, the grant of all Royal Charters and the approval of by-laws made thereunder, and the review of University Statutes under the Oxford and Cambridge Act, the Scottish Universities Act, and the Charters to modern Universities. The Lord President has also to deal with a number of questions touching the legislation of the Channel Islands and the appointment of sheriffs, and it is his duty to preside at all hearings before the Privy Council whether in connection with its ordinary functions or under Special Statutes such as The London Government Act, 1899, whereby the Privy Council was charged with the supervision of the Commissioners and the final settlement of some 200 Orders and Schemes intimately affecting the local life and administration of London. On certain occasions he has important duties of a ceremonial character in connection with State functions.

Appointment and Promotion of Custons Officer.

MR. C. DUNCAN (Barrow-in-Furness): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the departures by the Board of Customs from the terms of the Treasury Minute of the 24th March 1891, relating to an inquiry by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Financial Secretary into the administration of the Customs Department, have been sanctioned by the House of Commons; and whether, in view of the effect of these departures affecting the appointment of officers to collectorships, acting, and import gauging, on the promotion of the officers concerned, he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Customs in their interpretation and application of the Minute have acted with the concurrence of the Treasury. It is not usual, nor would it be practicable, to require such matters of administration to be decided by the House of Commons.

MR. C. DUNCAN: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, what was the average service of Customs second class examining officers, as such, on promotion to the first class at the time of the Goschen Inquiry, in 1890 and in 1897 respectively; and whether he proposes to take any steps to secure that Mr. Goschen's promise of more rapid promotion shall be fulfilled.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The average service of Customs second class examining officers, as such, on promotion to the first class was, for the years stated, as follows:—

1890 - 13 years 1⅓ months.
1897 - 15 years 4 months.

It should, however, be added that the number of officers so promoted in these years was—

1890 - - - - 16
1897 - - - - 32

For last year, 1905, the promotions numbered thirty-five, with an average service of thirteen years two and a quarter months. Since the date when the Goschen Minute was brought into full effect the prospects of second class examining officers have been improved as regards superior appointments to the following extent:—

Year.	Number of examining officers, second class, on establishment.	Superior posts in direct line of promotion.	per cent.
1892–3 - -	872	346	39·6
Present time -	834	380	45·5

The cases of certain officers whose promotion was delayed in a manner that was not foreseen at the time of the inquiry have been met by granting special allowances of £7 10s. and £15 a year, and a higher maximum salary of £250 instead of £220 has been granted to the whole class.

Mr. C. DUNCAN: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Goschen Minute of 1891 recommended the appointment of Customs officers from the outdoor department to collectorships; will he say how many such appointments were made during the first seven years of the administration of this Minute; how many collectors have been appointed since 1891 to the present time; and how many of these were selected from the outdoor department.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Treasury Minute of March 24th, 1891, recommended that promotion should be made from the class of surveyors to collectorships when the public interest allowed. Of course this recommendation did not mean that collectors should be drawn exclusively from the class of surveyors, but only that that class should enjoy prospects from which they had previously been debarred. The numbers asked for in the latter part of the Question are as follows:—

Period.	Total Number of Appointments to Collectorships.	Number who were appointed to Collectorships direct from the Outdoor Department.		Number who entered as Outdoor Officers and were appointed to Collectorships after passing through one or more other grades.
		Entered originally as Clerk.	Entered originally as Outdoor Officer.	
March 1891 to March 1898	28	1	1	5
March 1898 to date - -	46	6	3	12
Total -	74	7	4	17
		11		

Since 1890 at least twelve members of the outdoor department have refused collectorships. This subject was fully discussed in an Answer given by the Financial Secretary of the day to a Question in this House on March 24th, 1896,† and I have nothing further to add to his remarks.

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† See (4) *Debates*, xxxix., 48.

MR. C. DUNCAN: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Goschen Minute condemned acting, *i.e.*, the employment of officers of an inferior grade on duties appertaining to a superior one, in the Customs Department; and whether he will furnish a Return showing the number of days on which assistants of Customs were employed on examining officers' duties during the past twelve months in the ports of Leith, Glasgow, and Bristol.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Treasury Minute recognised that "in all public departments the duties of superior officers temporarily absent must be discharged by subordinates who act for them, and thereby receive a valuable training in the work of the higher appointments to which they may eventually succeed," and the principle thus enunciated has, in regard to the extent of "acting" in the Customs Department, been carefully adhered to since the date of the Minute quoted. In the following tabular statement are given the particulars requested in the second part of the Question:—

Port.	Number of days during the 12 months ended 31st March 1906 on which assistants of Customs were employed on examining officers' duties.
Leith - -	224
Glasgow -	206
Bristol - -	72†

At these ports the employment of assistants on superior duties was mainly due to an abnormal amount of sick leave and special absence constituting a time of exceptional pressure or emergency, as referred to on page ten of the Goschen Minute. It may be added that on certain days more than one assistant was employed on superior duty, the aggregate number of days, calculated at eight hours per day, being as follows:—

Port.	Number of assistants at port.	Number of days of "acting" performed by assistants.	Average number of days of "acting" for each assistant during year.
Leith - - - -	10	350	35‡
Glasgow - - -	25	418	16
Bristol - - - -	13	226	17

Postal Servants and Notice of Alteration of Duty.

MR. E. EDWARDS (Hanley): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that on the occasion of a mass meeting of Catholics at Hanley on April 23rd, clerks in the Hanley office were not notified of alterations in their time of attendance until the afternoon of the same day, one officer who had already performed 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. being informed at his residence only a few minutes before leaving home for the original second portion of his duty; and, seeing that this action is a contravention of official rulings regarding due notice being given whenever possible of alterations of duty, whether he will say what action he proposes to take.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will make inquiry into the matter.

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† In addition, one assistant performs for three hours each day duties which are usually undertaken by an examining officer, second class.

‡ The Board's attention having been called to the position at Leith, aid was sent some weeks ago.

Education Expenditure.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state the basis of the figures given in columns three and six of the statement of the moneys expended on education recently presented to Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The figures given in column three of the Return merely states the nominal rate which would be needed on the assessable value to produce the sum named in column two, and similarly in the other rate columns. The actual rate that would have to be levied to produce that sum would usually be higher, because the actual product of a given rate is always less than the nominal, owing to such causes as irrecoverable arrears, reduction on compounding, empty houses, etc. This difference varies greatly, amounting in many places to considerably more than 10 per cent. This will account, in the majority of instances, for any difference between the rate given in the Return and the rate actually levied in any place. But it must further be noted that in the case of counties the county rate basis has been taken, as being the only secure basis for a general comparative Return such as this, though the rates in counties are actually levied under the Education Act on the poor rate basis. Moreover, though the figures in columns two and five are the figures sent in by the various authorities, the sums named may in several cases not have actually been expended during the year, and to that extent the rate actually needed may not have been so high as the figure given in columns three or six after correction as above. The figures in columns four to six are specially liable to differ from the true amounts, since they depend almost wholly on estimates made by the authorities early in 1905. All the foregoing remarks hold true, *mutatis mutandis*, of the figures given in the Return in respect of education other than elementary. I may add that in reckoning assessable value throughout the Return agricultural land has been taken at half its rateable value; at the same time the Exchequer grants under the Agricultural Rates Act have been included in columns one and four.

Irish School Building Plans.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork, County N. E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that inconvenience and expense are caused by the delay on the part of the Treasury in issuing the new building plans for national schools in Ireland; and if he can state when these plans will be available.

(*Answered by Mr. M'Kenna.*) I replied to a similar Question yesterday. I have nothing to add to the Answer which I then gave.†

Re-instatement of Evicted Tenants—Case of Mr. George Ward.

Mr. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the estate of Mr. John H. Deazley is in process of sale to the tenants; and, if so, whether the Estates Commissioners will endeavour to procure the re-instatement of Mr. George Ward in the holding from which his family was evicted.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that no proceedings in respect of the sale of this estate have been instituted before them, and they have no knowledge of any negotiations between the landlord and tenants which may be proceeding. The Commissioners have received an application for reinstatement from George and Teague Ward, whose former holding is in the occupation of a new tenant. The Commissioners have no power to interfere with the present occupant of the holding, but they will in due course inquire into the claims of the evicted tenants, with the view of considering whether they may be otherwise provided for.

Irish Salmon Fisheries—Use of Drift Nets.

Mr. HUGH LAW: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Conservators of Fisheries of the Letterkenny district propose to prohibit the use of drift nets for the capture of salmon of a greater length than 400 yards, and also the use of such nets within three miles of the shores; whether he is aware that at least 1,600 fishermen, with nets of the estimated value of £8,000, are engaged in this fishery; and whether, in view of the injury which these by-laws, and especially the first mentioned, would cause to this industry, he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

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† See col. 740.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction have received applications that they should make by-laws limiting the use of drift nets for salmon off the North-west Coast of Ireland. The Department, however, will not make the by-laws in question without full and exhaustive public inquiry. The Conservators have no power to make bye-laws.

LIGHT DUES (ABOLITION) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir ROBERT ROPNER (Stockton) said he rose to move the Second Reading of the Light Dues (Abolition) Bill. Had it not been for the fact that this was a new House he should have moved the Second Reading of this Bill without saying anything of its provisions, but under the circumstances he felt constrained to say a few words. There had been several similar Bills before the House on former occasions, and last year a Resolution was carried in favour of the principles of the measure. The last Bill was rather encumbered with other clauses. It provided, or at any rate pointed out a way in which the light dues in future could be reduced and economy effected in both expenditure and collection. It also pointed out that larger amounts were being collected than were actually required, and that consequently the shipping industry was more handicapped than it ought to have been. In this Bill they asked for the abolition of the light dues and that the cost of lighting our coasts should hereafter be borne by the nation. Under these circumstances the Board of Trade would no doubt see that no more money was collected than was required and that it was economically expended. The object of the Bill was to put the cost on the nation instead of on a particular class. The present position arose in this way. Many years ago when there were no lights on our shores some religious community lit up a portion of the coast to show how dangerous it was. There was no charge then. The lighting of the coast was then taken up as a speculation by some private individuals who, to recoup themselves, levied dues on those ships that frequented the different harbours on that part of the coast. In that way it came about that the shipowners were mulcted in a charge which should have been a national one. This system having been initiated it continued after the private individuals had ceased to light the coast. The matter was then taken up by the Admiralty, who continued the custom. Under the Act of 1854 the supervision of the lights was put into the hands of the Board of Trade. They did not look after the lighting of the coast, however, but entrusted that duty to three different bodies, the Trinity House of London, a lighting board in Scotland, and another in Ireland called the Irish Lights Board. There was a strong feeling among shipowners that the composition of those bodies was not what it ought to be, though he would not now enter into that question. But seeing that the dues were charged upon the ships frequenting our ports one would have supposed that all ships coming to the ports would have contributed to the charge. The Royal Navy, however, did not contribute at all in any way towards the lighting of the coasts It was an unquestionable fact that the Navy did derive benefit from the lights, and that they were as much protected by them as the mercantile navy; and the shipowners thought that if light dues were to be charged on vessels frequenting our ports they should be charged on all, including those of the Royal Navy. He was aware that previous Chancellors of Exchequer had said that the shipowners derived special benefits from the Navy, but he could never understand that argument, because the ships did not exist for pleasure but to carry on the commerce of the nation, and it was the commerce that the Navy protected, and the fact that it was the commerce of the country and not of a particular class should make the lighting of the coast the business of the nation and not of that particular class. Lighthouses were to protect not only the vessels frequenting our shores but all vessels passing our coasts, and that was another reason why this should be a national charge. Supposing these islands were self contained and we had no mercantile navy, then for the sake of the ships of other nations passing our coasts the coasts would have to be lit. The charge was paid by every large nation of Europe except Turkey, to whom we certainly should not look for an example in matters of this kind. They were frequently told that it did not matter to the shipowner, because he could take these dues out of his customers by making a special charge, but that was not so. There was no special shipping of any particular freight to this country. The freights were made generally on charters which applied not only to England but to all continental countries. The owner of the cargo had the right to send a vessel to any port, and if a vessel was ordered by the owner of the cargo to France or Germany or Holland or Sweden it escaped the light dues, but when it came to England the shipowner was mulcted in light dues. That showed that the shipowner could not recover the amount by a special charge on the cargo. He had to take his chance. All the Committees which had sat on this question had agreed in the matter. Everybody to whom the subject was mentioned for the first time supposed that the cost should be borne by the nation, and most of the persons who had sat upon Committees before which this matter had come had recommended that the charge should be a national one. The fact that such a charge was made upon vessels coming to this country interfered with shipping in this way. It acted as a disadvantage abroad. Abroad no charges were made, and in America no light dues were charged; but owing to our charging light dues on American vessels coming to this country we were made to pay what was called a tonnage rate in America, with the result that while this country derived in the shape of light dues from America £5,000, the shipowners of this country paid America something like £70,000 a year in tonnage dues. There was another danger, which was that the people of the United States, in order to add to the income of the country, were advocating the imposition of light dues on all vessels calling at their ports. So that by making this charge we were inducing other countries to make a similar one, and it was to the interest of this country that no such charge should be made against us. It was said that the proposal would entail a loss on the Exchequer. The cost was about £500,000 a year; out of that foreign vessels paid about £70,000; but because we were deriving a profit in that way should we make that an excuse for making the charge on our own vessels if it was not an equitable charge? Under the new Shipping Bill we were going to make foreign vessels subject to the same treatment in the matter of the load line and other matters as was meted out to English vessels in our ports. And if we treated the foreigner fairly with regard to the light dues he would be more likely to accept the tax and rest satisfied with it than he was now. There was no doubt we did treat the foreigner unfairly in this matter. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not lost anything by the mercantile navy. A few years ago a purchase was made of Suez Canal shares. £4,000,000 was spent in that way. Those shares were now worth £33,000,000. At the time those shares were bought it was arranged that the dues of the canal should be not more than 25 per cent. of the outlay, but even now they were 3 per cent. above that, which was a great deal more than the shipowners were led to expect they would be, and the shipowners in that way had contributed to the Exchequer. He did not wish to press that point, but to urge that the shipowners did suffer in many ways, and that some attempt should be made to take off their shoulders this charge which they claimed they ought not to pay. On former occasions the Second Reading of similar Bills had been carried by the House, and a Resolution affirming the principle, which was also carried, was supported by the present Attorney-General. The hon. and learned Gentleman then said that the lighting of our coasts should be a national obligation. It was also supported by the Solicitor-General, who considered it was putting John Bull in a rather ignominious light to suggest that he should collect pence from those who came to see him for the purpose of lighting them into his own house. In addition to those Gentlemen many others supported the Resolution, and he trusted that those Gentlemen, apart from any who might be in office, would support the present Bill. He appealed to those who had Motions down for the rejection of the Bill fully to consider what they were doing. He should have thought that hon

Members would have been glad to relieve of this burden a class who were always anxious to do as much as they could for those they employed, when by its removal they would be able to pay more wages than they could at present. He hoped, therefore, that opposition would be removed and that there would be no one from the Opposition side of the House who would not vote for the Second Reading. If the Bill was read a second time it could not have any effect this year, because it was a financial matter and therefore must be introduced by a responsible Secretary of State. He hoped, however, that that would not prevent hon. Members voting for the Bill. No doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be influenced by to-day's proceedings and would, he hoped, make provision in his Budget next year to provide for the loss which the Exchequer would sustain if the charge for lighting in future had to be borne by the nation and not by the shipowners. He begged to move.

MR. W. R. REA (Scarborough) said that in rising to second the Motion of his hon. friend, he had to ask the House not only for indulgence to a new Member, but to bear for a very short time a recital of what perhaps was not a very popular cause, particularly among Members who had not altogether understood it. He should like at once to meet the principal opposition that had been brought against the Bill. The statement was made last session that this was an attempt on the part of a wealthy and powerful class to shift upon the Exchequer a burden which they could very well afford to sustain. If that were so, he did not believe the House would have listened for a moment to any such proposal as this Bill contained. As the hon. mover had said, the principle involved in the measure had been approved by Royal Commission, by Committees of the House, and by the House itself. He believed the shipping industry were willing to bear whatever charges might be shown to be fair, and they had given proof of their desire to do so, particularly in this session, by the way in which they had accepted a number of clauses in the Merchant Shipping Bill. The objection of shipowners to this impost of light dues was on the ground that it was an unjust charge, and that it led to extravagant administration. He believed that these dues gave a distinct preference to foreign ports. It was an unfair charge because the lights were for the benefit of vessels passing along our coasts irrespective of whether they used our ports or not; and yet the dues were payable, not by those who used the lights, but only by those vessels which berthed in a British port, and upon which it was possible to collect the dues. He believed that the proportion of ships on which this country collected dues amounted only to about 50 per cent. of the vessels using the lights. Incidentally it placed the British ports at a great disadvantage as compared with foreign ports. He would give an example. Supposing a British shipowner was offered, as was frequently the case, the choice of about the same freight to either London or Antwerp. If he sent his ship to London he had to pay light dues, but if he sent it to Antwerp he saved the light dues which might amount to anything up to £100 on the voyage. The shipowner would be more than human if he did not give a preference to the foreign port where he would not incur these dues. Therefore, to that extent the British ports lost a lot of trade, British commerce was taxed, and British labour suffered. He could quite believe that this burden was not entirely one on the shipowners, but bore also on the consumers, because if the shipowner did send his ship to London he naturally would want an extra freight, which would have to be put upon the consumer. But the burden went further than this. These dues hit the British shipping heavily, particularly in the North Atlantic trade, for the United States had, he believed, a law that their own dues should be remitted to the extent by which American dues exceeded the dues levied upon American ships. There were perhaps half-a-dozen American ships which traded with this country from which we collected £4,000 a year in light dues, while English vessels were charged to the extent of £80,000 a year by the United States. We were precluded from asking for the remission of even a part of that charge because of the paltry £4,000 we collected from American ships. He thought that would be sufficient condemnation of these dues, but the strongest objection to them was that the money was unfairly raised and was subject to no efficient supervision, and that it was therefore to a very large extent extravagantly spent. There were three authorities who revised these dues. He was unable to find out how one of the authorities, the Commissioners of Northern Lights, were appointed, though he understood that they consisted principally of lawyers. With all due respect to his right hon. friend he submitted that lawyers were perhaps not the gentlemen who were most expert in the administration of the duties appertaining to lighthouses. The fact was that nearly the whole of these bodies were composed of co-opted members, which was to say, that they were practically self-appointed. It was interesting to compare what had occurred during the last six years under the Light Dues Act, by which the money raised had to be devoted entirely to lighting purposes, with the practice of many years previously, when the Board of Trade had some supervision over these Boards. For sixteen years during which the Board of Trade had some control, the expenditure on new works under these Boards averaged £63,000 a year. Now that the Board of Trade had what practically amounted to no control over this expenditure on new works, the expenditure had increased to very nearly £96,000 per annum. It would take a considerable amount of eloquence to persuade shipowners at any rate that that increase in expenditure was represented by an equivalent in increased efficiency. That was not the whole story. The Commissioners each year collected a sum not only sufficient to pay the dues, but to leave a profit which had averaged for the past six years £22,000, and he believed the accumulated surplus now lying to the credit of these funds amounted to £400,000.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): No, £300,000.

MR. W. R. REA said he accepted the figures of the right hon. Gentleman. The sum was quite sufficient for his purpose. Although this Bill could not perhaps become law this session, because it would involve a charge upon the Exchequer, yet it would be possible to remit these dues, and the charge need not fall upon the Exchequer until the £300,000 in reserve had been expended, and expended under the criticism and watchfulness of the Board of Trade. He was aware that the crux of the whole matter was the expense, and it was very difficult to ask the Exchequer to find £500,000 and more at the present moment. But something could be done out of the Suez Canal shares which were held by the Government, and on which they had received their capital with interest twice over, and still received a return of 28 per cent. per annum, or over £1,000,000 sterling, £600,000 of which came out of British ships. He believed this case had been presented to the Treasury, and they had expressed their willingness to meet the shipowners to the extent of reducing these dues somewhat, but the difficulty arose when the proposition was put before foreign nations, who refused to bear their fair share in the reduction, and therefore it was impossible to carry it out. He ventured to submit that the Treasury would be carrying out the desire that they had expressed, if, instead of remitting these dues on the Suez Canal, they were to ear-mark a certain part of the dues for payment of the expense of lighting our coasts. It was of considerable importance not only to the shipping industry of this country, but to the nation as a whole. He believed that these dues placed British ships, British ports, and also British labour at an unfair disadvantage in competition with other countries, and he asked the House to reaffirm the view it had so often expressed before. He therefore begged to second the Motion.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Robert Ropner.*)

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said he was in favour of this as of any other proposal for removing restrictions on British trade which were not imposed on the foreigner, and he was very glad indeed to find that those of them who took that view found recruits on the Ministerial side of the House upon whom the light was gradually dawning, and he believed that in time they would come to see entirely eye to eye with them. He believed that England claimed the proud distinction of being the only absolutely free-trade country, except Turkey, and yet England put this tax upon her trade, upon her shipowners, which no other country was prepared to impose. He for one was only too glad to join with hon. Members, on whatever side of the House they might sit, in removing these restrictions upon our own trade, and putting British shipowners in fair competition with the foreigner. But he wished that the mover of this Bill had enlarged the scope of the measure or had introduced the same Bill that was brought in in the last House of Commons, because he did not think the present went far enough in dealing, as the last Bill did, with the lighting authorities in England, Ireland, and Scotland. In Ireland, unfortunately, the Lights Commissioners, as he had said on a previous occasion, were simply a lot of fossilised old fogeys with the single brilliant exception who had since joined the Board—the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Belfast. With that exception the Lights Commissioners, he was afraid, were absolutely dead to all appeals, whatever those appeals might be, for dealing more efficiently with the duties which they ought to perform. He would give one illustration. He recently obtained from the President of the Board of Trade a Return of the wrecks upon the coast of his own constituency, and it showed that no fewer than 179 wrecks had occurred in ten years. He had appealed again and again for a lighthouse upon a very dangerous part of the coast, for the lighthouse which was built many years ago there had never been lighted. The Press of the North of Ireland had been unanimous in appealing upon this matter, and the county council had passed Resolutions, but the Lights Commissioners were dead to all appeals. He had hoped that something would have been introduced into the Bill making the Lights Commissioners more responsible to a Department represented in Parliament, and he still hoped the Bill might be extended to deal with the subject. The late Lord Ritchie, when at the Board of Trade, gave a promise that he would deal on an early occasion with the whole subject of the Lights Commissioners of the three countries, and he could not help appealing to the new President of the Board of Trade, who had brought fresh energy and enthusiasm to his work, to consider whether these gentlemen could not be placed directly under the control of some Department responsible to Parliament.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): I rise for the purpose of withdrawing the Motion standing in my name, and to say that we do not intend to oppose the present stage of this Bill.

SIR D. DIXON (Belfast, N.) said there certainly were no old fossils on the Irish Lights Commissioners Board. The hon. Member who seconded this Bill had said that the Lights Commissioners were mostly lawyers. His impression was that there were no lawyers on the Board at all. He should certainly support the Second Reading.

MR. T. L. CORBETT reminded the hon. Baronet that he stated that he was the bright exception that proved the rule.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) in moving that the Bill be read a second time this day six months said that here they had a body of men belonging to the most flourishing industry in the country, asking the nation to give them £500,000 of money. ["No, no."] They were asking taxpayers for the maintenance of lights which their ships used. They might just as well ask them to pay for the coal which was burned in their ships. Surely a lighthouse was as necessary to shipping as coal or stokers. Nobody used lighthouses except ships, just as railway signals were useful to railways. If this Bill passed they might find railway companies coming to this House, asking them to pay the cost of railway signals. [Cries of "Oh, oh."] The argument used was that the lighting of the coast ought to be a national charge, and he was afraid many hon. Members had been led away by that seductive delusion. A national charge would have to be met out of the taxes. He would like to know which tax the shipowners desired them to raise in order to pay for the light dues. Was it the duty on tea, or tobacco?

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): Land values.

MR. HAROLD COX said that was a very good suggestion, but he did not see why poor widows and orphans should pay an increased tax, in order to relieve shipowners. He wished to point out that the shipowners did not provide the whole of the £500,000. They collected the money from their customers.

and he thought that was the best way of raising it, and under that system everybody concerned paid a fair quota. Certain detailed arguments had been used in favour of this proposal. The hon. Member for Scarborough had said that the British shipowners had to pay for the lights used by foreign ships passing up and down the Channel. Did British ships not have the benefit of the lights in the Mediterranean? It should also be remembered that there were more British than foreign ships. The hon. Member for Scarborough had said there were no light dues going to Antwerp, but there were coming from Antwerp to London, and therefore the British shipowner was tempted to send his ship to Antwerp. What was the answer to that? The light dues were not the only charges, because there were harbour dues to be paid. Was it suggested that the State should pay the cost of maintaining the harbours? He could not see the difference between the use of harbours and the use of lights. In France the harbours were built out of the national exchequer, and instead of building a few big harbours in the most convenient places where they were wanted they had built a number of small harbours. Why? Because they were built for political purposes, and each constituency wanted its own little harbour. The result was that an enormous amount of French money had been spent in building little harbours most of which were practically useless. He agreed that the shipowners had a grievance in the fact that these lights were built and managed for them and they had no voice in the control; but that grievance could easily be met. The proper course to adopt was to allow the shipowners to have full representation on those boards and let them do exactly what they liked—blow them all out if they liked. [Cries of "Oh, oh."] They knew they would not blow them out. The whole system of lighting should be put into the hands of a board mainly controlled by shipowners. He was aware that the Admiralty used the lights without paying for them and perhaps there was a small point in that, but that would be met if the Admiralty paid the same tonnage rate as private ships. It should not, however, be forgotten that the Navy was maintained very largely for the protection of our shipping. The only way in which they could secure economy was by insisting that the people who used a particular thing should pay for it themselves, and he challenged the shipowners to say what particular tax it was by means of which they proposed to raise this money.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport) formally seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale) said that for perverse wrongheadedness commend him to that comparatively small part of our fiscal system which was involved in the collection of light dues from shipping. Every other country in the world provided lighthouses and beacons, and undertook the duty of warning shipping from coast dangers at the national expense; but the British plan was to put the cost of doing this upon the trade of the particular district where the lighthouse happened to be required. We were in the position of protecting foreign ports in their competition with British ports; and we handicapped our own ports to the extent of the light dues. The vessel trading with the Continental ports of Northern Europe used our Channel lights, passed on, and paid nothing; but if she came to England she was made to pay. The result of this was that the Continent was sometimes preferred. The British system had a further and a graver disadvantage. Every now and again we had some terrible shipping disaster, accompanied it might be by loss of life, of which a contributing cause—or, perhaps, the sole cause—was the absence of a lighthouse where, in the interests of safe navigation, there ought to be one. The probabilities were that there was no lighthouse because there was nobody to pay for it. Whose business, for instance, should it be to put a lighthouse on the Brayes rocks, off the coast of Guernsey? Those were, and had been, responsible for disasters to some ten or a dozen steamers within his recollection, and were unlighted; but who was to pay for the light? Was it fair to expect Guernsey to do so? Our Guernsey friends had no special interest in making the channel between the islands safe for passers-by to France, where no light dues could be collected. The Guernsey case was a typical instance which came under his notice in consequence of a disaster to a steamer in which he was interested. But there was another instance nearer home. The estuary of the Dee was much used as a harbour of refuge, and ought to be properly lighted. As a matter of fact, vessels were afraid to run for it in the dark; and when the Dee Conservancy Board, of which he was a member, approached the Trinity Corporation, they were met with the reply that the trade of the district did not warrant the expense. There were no means of collecting the light dues, as vessels merely running for shelter were not reported at any Custom House. But the collection of light dues was not altogether indefensible. The one redeeming feature, in his eyes was that the foreigner now paid a large and rapidly increasing part of them. The reason was not very gratifying to our national vanity; but, as one might see from the advertisement columns of our London papers, we had so completely lost our shipping supremacy on the great trade route that the costly lights of the English Channel were now mainly supported by the magnificent German steamers of large tonnage, created not under a system of free trade, but under a system of Protection, which called at our southern ports almost daily, and took away business which ought to be ours.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON said his hon. friend the Member for Preston had opposed the Bill by introducing arguments which were not in accordance with the views of Cobden or his followers. He wished to point out some of the fallacies in his hon friend's line of argument. He had compared the lighting of our coasts to the lighting of their own lines by railway companies. That was obviously a false analogy. A railway company owned its own line and allowed no one else to participate in the control, and therefore to use that argument was surely to obscure the issue. That line of argument would involve the reimposition of tolls upon all our roads. The hon. Member said that was the only economic way of dealing with coast lights.

Mr. David Maciver.

MR. HAROLD COX: It is a question of convenience.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON said he did not think his hon. friend could run away from his own argument by using a phrase about convenience. He said the only economic way was to force the people who used institutions to pay directly for those institutions.

MR. HAROLD COX: So far as practicable.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON said tolls were practicable, and even to-day this medieval institution still existed in full force in some places in the country. On the hon. Member's principle any citizen would be entitled to object to pay for the ordinary lighting of streets by stating that he never went out at night, and that the lighting should be paid for solely by those who used the streets after dark. The line of argument of his hon. friend would lead him to those practical absurdities at every turn. But worse than that, he had emphatically contradicted himself. He had used the argument that the nation actually did pay these light dues, that they did not fall upon the shipowners, and that every person who bought goods which were sea carried paid a share of the cost of lighting the coasts. From the point of view of Cobdenism that was an extremely vicious position to take up, for his hon. friend laid the burden of the cost at the source, and, therefore, the consumer would have to pay more than the amount imposed for the light dues. It was thus an uneconomical tax from the point of view of his hon friend as a free trader. But after laying down that every user of goods paid the dues, his hon. friend, when met with the innocent suggestion that the extra burden required for the maintenance of lights might be met by a tax on land values, said that that would be taxing poor widows and orphans for the benefit of shipowners. On his own showing it would not be to benefit shipowners but to benefit every section of the community, including widows and orphans. He thought that widows and orphans figured to a larger extent among the consumers of tea than in the class who were interested in land values. His hon. friend's position in this matter was untenable. Another matter of extreme importance was that in virtue of the present system, which was an extraordinary combination of anomalies, lights were lacking on the coasts where they were wanted. If the hon. Member for Preston had been perfectly consistent he would have said that the shipowners who paid the dues ought to have control of the lights.

MR. HAROLD COX: I did make that proposal.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON said he was sure the House would regard that as an impracticable suggestion. He did not know whether shipowners would manage the lights as well as Trinity House, or any of the other boards of control in other parts of the United Kingdom, but the fact remained that through lack of lights where they were needed we were face to face with a system which was a real scandal to our civilisation. This matter was discussed as if only shipowners' profits were concerned, but hon. Members surely did not forget that these lights meant lives, and the lack of them an enormous annual death roll. There was no species of national expenditure they ought to make with less hesitation than this. If it was true that by reason of the lack of lighthouses disasters to ships occurred, it was deplorable that anyone should haggle over the question whether the service should form a national charge. It should be a national charge, and a national charge, he was sure, it would become. He would say to hon. Members who might be disposed to regard this measure as a relief to capital that in his opinion it was a relief to commerce, trade, and industry. Most Members of the House were in favour of the clause in the Workmen's Compensation Bill by which shipowners were to be made responsible for the lives of their seamen. That responsibility would, he believed, add something to the charges on the shipping trade. He thought Liberalism would be in a singular position if it were to proceed to lay fresh burdens on the shipping trade, and at the same time to refuse to take off a burden for the maintenance of which there was not a single argument in equity or consistency.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton) said he had a Motion on the Paper for the rejection of the Bill, but he would withdraw it for two reasons; first because of the sweet reasonableness of the shipowners on another question, and, secondly, because of the speech made by the hon. Member for Preston, who had been very well answered by the hon. Member for the Tyneside division. When the hon. Member for Preston said that shipowners ought to have the control of the lights he was forcibly reminded of some lines which were popular in Liverpool some years ago in reference to shipowners, although he did not say they deserved the description:—

"I go to church on Sunday,
But see me on Monday,
Plotting and planning to take men's lives,
What care I for the men or their wives?"

The inference of the hon. Member for Preston was that the shipowners, in protecting their property, could use the lights with a total disregard for the lives of the men who were on the ships.

MR. HAROLD COX: I must protest against that. I do not think the hon. Member can be serious in making the statement, for I never inferred anything of the kind.

MR. SEDDON thought the hon. Member ought to be more careful in what he said. He took it that the hon. Member was not here as a jester or joker, but to deal with serious matters. The present proposal was to take a charge off shipowners. He hoped shipowners would recognise that he himself was chiefly concerned with the interests of labour, and not with those of shipowners in particular. He agreed that this ought to be a national charge for two reasons. One was the risk of life being lost through lack of lights. The hon. Member for the Kirkdale division of Liverpool had referred to a place near Guernsey where life was lost through the lack of a light. In this House they recognised more and more the sacredness of human life. They recognised that property should have all the safeguards which could be given, but they recognised also that anything that could be done to protect human life should be done irrespective of cost. They did not want to single out and make victims of shipowners. This was a national question, and the nation ought to bear the cost of lighting the coasts. There ought also to be uniformity and efficiency, and on behalf of the Labour Party he heartily supported the principle of the Bill.

*Mr. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire) said he agreed with what had been urged in regard to the lack of lights meaning the loss of men's lives. The proper lighting of the coasts was a matter which affected not only commerce, but also safe navigation. The whole charge for the lighting of the coasts should fall upon the public revenue. It was a service provided for the general benefit. It was for the benefit not only of the British people but of foreigners as well. This question ought to be dealt with in the same way as the lighting of the streets, especially as the cost of putting it upon the Exchequer would be a small one. The hon. Member for Preston who opposed the Bill said that this was a case in which the shipowners were coming to the Exchequer for £500,000 of money, but it seemed to him that that was a serious misdescription of what was taking place. Indeed, that hon. Member himself admitted that the light dues ultimately increased the cost of carriage. As one who had no financial interest in shipping he was glad to support this proposal. The hon. Member for Preston had said that if they charged vessels harbour dues they should also charge them light dues. That was a false analogy. Harbour dues were paid only by ships that frequented the harbours, and the harbours benefited these ships alone ; but light dues had to be paid by ships frequenting our harbours, while they were not paid by ships which did not frequent our harbours, though they still utilised our lights. Ships from North German ports and from the Baltic for the Atlantic used the lights on the British coasts just as much as our own ships did, but for practical purposes we said to them, "So long as you keep clear of British ports, so long you will not have to pay the light dues." That was an unfair differentiation against British shipping. In consequence of the continuance of these light dues the United States, by way of retaliation, imposed certain charges upon British shipping which they did not impose upon the shipping of any other nation, and these charges amounted to something over £50,000 a year. All these considerations seemed to suggest that we should do away with these exceptional charges. With the possible exception of Turkey, we were the only nation in the world to impose duties of this sort. In one other respect we were like Turkey, for we imposed an export duty upon one article, but he was glad to say that was to be abandoned, and he hoped we should soon part company with Turkey in this as well. It was the more important to consider this matter in view of the fact that prospective legislation with which he was in general sympathy would increase the charges in various ways upon British shipping. If proper steps were taken in this matter it would be of considerable importance to our shipping industry and would help us to maintain that enormous lead in shipping which we had at present and which he hoped we might long continue to possess.

*Mr. BYLES (Salford, N.) said the answer to the argument used about the railways was that it was based upon a false idea. It was said that the railway had only to light its own line and nobody had a right to come upon it, but a railway company was bound to carry anybody who wished to go upon their line, and therefore a railway was quite as public as the high seas. For that reason the argument of his hon. friend the Member for Preston remained untouched, because it was just as beneficial to everybody that a railway should be lighted as that our coasts should be lighted. He regretted to find himself differing from his colleagues with whom he was usually associated because of his opposition to this Bill, but what had impressed him, not only in this but in previous debates, was that the demand for relief came from wealthy and prosperous companies. One after another shipowners rose to ask relief from this tax, but it could not be argued that they represented a ruined industry. He had just been looking at some figures which showed that Liverpool shipping had grown five times over in thirty years. Shipping was an extremely profitable industry, and perfectly well able to bear this charge of £500,000. The whole contention appeared to be, however, that the State should relieve it of a charge which it was well able to bear, and the money to pay for which it got from the public. It was probable that the moment this concession was agreed to the shipowners would come to the House and ask for fresh lights here and there, and further cost would be incurred. The ground upon which he opposed the Bill was that the cost was now borne by those who were well able to bear it, and it was proposed now to put it upon a fund which was not able to do so. They had been taunted time after time from the Treasury and front Opposition Bench with being too ready to spend money. They were twitted with the fact that while the House complained of high taxation and expenditure it was always ready to vote money to add to that taxation and expenditure. He on this occasion wished to defend the Chancellor of the Exchequer from the assaults which were being made upon him by this wealthy industry. He said that if the Exchequer could afford it, it ought to give them money for many other objects which were very much more pressing than this. He was sorry that the Labour Party had withdrawn their Amendments, and that the arguments they had been listening to in the Lobby had had some influence upon them [Cries of "Oh."] He said arguments, and there was no taunt in that. He did not know what arguments they might have been listening to. He did not know why they had withdrawn their suggestion, but perhaps it was because this proposal was in accordance with their Socialist idea, that all services which were national services should fall upon the national Exchequer. He had some sympathy with that, and in that respect he was a Socialist himself. He would like to see the nation undertake those services, but he said that if they were going to undertake this service, they should not devote to it the first £500,000 they had to spare, as there were many other subjects which ought to be dealt with before it.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said it was not often that he found himself in agreement with the great shipowners of this country. Many years ago he was a Member of the Ships' Subsidies Committee, and he found himself on that occasion in opposition to many shipowners, On that Committee a great deal of evidence was taken on this matter of light dues, and he thought an unanswerable case was made out in support of the object which the promoters of this Bill had in view. This was not a matter which concerned merely the shipowners, about whom he would not bother himself, because they were rich enough and influential enough to look after their own interests, but as an hon. Member representing the Labour Party had well said a few minutes ago it was a matter which touched the safety of a large portion of the community which very badly needed protection. He did not know any class in the United Kingdom, or indeed in the whole Empire who stood more in need of having their interests guarded in this House than the great seafaring populations of the country. They had no direct representation in Parliament; shipowners *galore* there were but the seaman had nobody to speak on their behalf ["Oh."] What he meant was that they had really no one except his hon. friend the Member for Middlesbrough, who for many years had represented the interests of the seafaring population as a seafaring man. But even if the hon. Member represented them directly the proportion was altogether out of keeping with the magnitude of the interests at stake and the representation on the other side. He intended to support the Bill because he thought it was really in the interest of the seafaring class. In regard to the protection of the coasts of the country no question of economy should be considered in view of the wrecks and loss of life which occurred daily. This was not a question of benefiting shipowners whose pockets he hoped would be touched by the Merchant Shipping Bill, but he believed that this Bill was in the interest of the seagoing population and it was their interest that he was considering. He ventured to say, as one who had been apprenticed to the sea, that he knew something about the feelings of these people. He thought they ought to be better represented in Parliament and he appealed to hon. Members not to be led away into opposing the Bill by any appeals to the wealth and greediness of the shipowners, but simply to bear in mind that this was a matter which affected some of the poorest and least represented of the people. He hoped the Bill would be carried by an enormous majority.

*MR. R. BALFOUR (Lanarkshire, Partick) said that, as one engaged in the export of commodities and the importation of produce, he would like to add a few words to those that had been said on this Bill. He altogether dissented from the views expressed by the hon. Member for Preston, whose analogy was not a good one. In comparing the lighting of the coasts with the lighting of a railroad the hon. Gentleman had forgotten the important facts that the lighting of the railroad was controlled by the railroad and used for the purposes of the railroad; that if the railroad did not pay its managers had the opportunity of advancing their rates; that they had no competition in the sense that competition was understood amongst shipowners, and that therefore they could obtain better results. Shipowners had to compete internationally; they had to compete with the shipping of other countries and accept rates which the shipowners of those countries, who had not this additional burden to bear, would accept. So far as loss of life was concerned, there was no man who felt more sympathy than the owner of the ship in regard to which the loss of life occurred. He had seen shipowners absolutely broken down when any loss of life had occurred, and to the shipowner there was no more unhappy or distressing task than having to write letters, breaking the news, to the relatives of those who had been lost. In his opinion the lighting of our coasts was a national duty and ought to be carried out at the national charge. He did not suggest that there was anything to find fault with in the present system of management, but surely if the shipowners had to pay for the lighting they ought to have some control and representation on the question of management. He did not think the management should be in the hands of such bodies as those who now controlled the lighting of the coast. It ought to be controlled by a Government Department as in the United States. In the United States of America there was a lighthouse board which controlled the lighting of the coasts of the country, and the control of that department was in the hands of the United States engineers, a branch of the military service of that country. It would be well, he thought, if we adopted the same practice and placed the lighting of our coasts in the hands of a Government Department. He admitted that there were certain charges for lighting which were of a local character. As he understood, shipowners had no objection to paying those local charges, as they came within a different category from the charges for lighting the coasts at large. It had to be borne in mind that other countries used our lighthouses when, for instance, passing down the Channel, and that we from our geographical position did not use the lights of other countries to anything like a corresponding extent. As he understood also, if we waived in our own ports this charge, which was partially paid by ships sailing under foreign flags, they in their turn would waive certain charges now made by them against ships flying the British flag. The charge directly and indirectly burdened the trade and commerce of this country, and from that point of view also the shipowners in his opinion ought to be relieved of it. His broad ground for supporting the Bill was that the lighting of our coasts was a national function, and that therefore it should be maintained out of national funds. That was the main principle he wished to put forward, and he hoped the Bill would get a Second Reading and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might ere long be able to make such arrangements as would enable this charge, so far as shipowners were concerned, to be finally removed.

*Mr. WILKIE (Dundee) said that this was no Party question nor was it a fiscal question. Had it been so he would have been against any artificial barrier being placed against the trade and commerce of the country. He looked upon the question from the point of view of those who had had the experience of a seagoing life. If some hon. Members had had the experience which others had had, and knew what it was on a wild winter night to stand on board ship watching for the shore lights in uncertainty whether or not they would be able to locate the right one, they would certainly vote for a Bill which would provide that the lights along our coast should be brighter and more efficient. That was not a mere capitalist question, it was a question of the safety of lives. He considered that the shipowners had made out a fair case that the payment of our coast lights was a national charge. The argument of lighting a railroad had no analogy to the lighting of the coast, for the simple reason that the railway and the property surrounding the railway was private property whilst the high seas belonged to all. Other nations made this a national charge, and he pleaded that we should not lag behind in the matter. It had been asked, "Where was the money to come from?" During the life of the present Parliament many Resolutions had been placed upon the records of the House, involving the expenditure of large sums, and he failed to see, if it were an equitable one, why the Motion now before the House should not also be placed on record and have the same opportunity in turn with the rest of becoming law.

*Mr. RIDSDALE (Brighton) said that the subject before the House was one upon which he had no special knowledge, although it was true that he represented a constituency which was probably the best lighted part of all our sea coast. He was afraid, however, if this Bill were passed it would not provide funds for the lighting of that part of the coast which he had the honour to represent. If it did he should not now be speaking against it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was the guardian of the public purse, and if any sum of money had to be extracted from the public purse he ought first to consider whether the cause for which it was to be extracted had the best claim. He did not think the hon. Gentlemen opposite who pressed for old age pensions, the payment of election expenses, and the payment of Members of Parliament, could claim that the shipping industry was withering away from the effect of these light dues. It was one of the most flourishing of all our industries, and was also the industry upon which the basis of our Empire rested. He would be loth to do anything which might injure that industry, but its great prosperity had been built up in spite of having to pay these shipping dues. There was another matter he wished to bring before the attention of the House. They were told that this taxation, which fell to a certain extent upon the shipping industry of this country, also fell slightly upon the foreign shipping industry. It was hard enough, amid all the ramifications of the fiscal arguments, to find anything which would enable us to extract taxation from the foreigner. This, however, was one of those cases in which we got money out of the foreigner. He did not deny, on general broad principles, that the lighting of our coasts was a national interest to be taken over by the State. Possibly, in the dim future, when we had reduced the great burden of taxation under which the country lay, this question might be taken up, but with the pressing claims which were being made by hon. Gentlemen opposite upon the purse of Chancellor of the Exchequer, he did not think it could be urged that this money should be taken out of the funds of the nation and given to those who really did not need it, viz., the shipowners of this country.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick) said he supported this measure, not because he had any interest in the shipowners of the country, but upon the broad lines that it was to the interests of the sea-faring population, of whom he was one, and of which he had some knowledge. He knew what it was to come on a coast badly lit and what a difference it was to come on a coast well lit. One of his principal reasons for supporting the Bill was that by it the lighting of the coast would be thrown upon the Government of the day, and they would thus get rid of the governing boards which now controlled the lighting. A great deal had been said by hon. Members who were opposed to this Bill with regard to the £500,000 that it would cost the Chancellor of the Exchequer to light the coasts, and as to where the money was to come from. But if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would care to consult him at any time, he would show the right hon. Gentleman how to provide for this charge without interfering in the least with any other matters that had been put forward. The right hon. Gentleman had only to cut off a second class cruiser every year from our programme of construction and he would gain more than sufficient to light our coasts. The Government were building at enormous cost every year fleets of ships which in ten or twelve years became obsolete, with the result that new fleets had to be built. It would be much better for the community at large if this money was devoted to schemes devised for the purposes of saving, rather than upon means for destroying, life. It was true the shipowners might gain a certain sum of money per annum if these charges were taken off. He had not great sympathy with the shipowners, not being a shipowner himself, but he did think that, if they could get the burden of these dues taken off, they should do so and then try to get something in return from the shipowners. The main reason why he supported the Bill was that he considered it most important that the Board of Trade, or some Government board, should have the control of coast lights, instead of the private boards which now controlled them.

*MR. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said that though the opinion of the House appeared to be unanimous upon this Bill they could not deprive themselves of the luxury of a debate upon it. As a shipowner he had the greatest possible hesitation in taking part in a debate upon a matter affecting an industry in which he had a pecuniary interest, and he should not have risen but for the very unfair remark of the hon. Member for North Salford in characterising the Bill as an appeal by wealthy shipowners for some advantage from the State. Those who had shares in shipping knew that during the last five years the average profits earned had not been enough to cover actual depreciation; still, they hoped for better times. It was not a question of wealthy or impoverished shipowners: it was a question of equity; and viewed from that point of view the principles of the Bill were reasonable. Instead of the lighting of our coasts falling upon a particular trade, they should be an Imperial charge. He would not follow the analogies and parallels which had been drawn during this debate. Argument by analogy was sometimes misleading, and resulted in false conclusions. He just wanted to point out that the shipping industry was not only one of the most important trades in this country, but one which affected nearly every other trade. It carried all our commodities at the lowest possible cost, which was a matter of the greatest importance to us. He wished to bring before the House the astonishing fact that the average rates of freight in the Atlantic and other trades of similar length of voyage, which have ruled for the past five years, were such that, as far as ocean navigation charges were concerned, a ton of merchandise was transported 100 miles for one penny and a sixth. They would thus see that the shipping industry had practically annihilated distance, and realise what a wonderful and important service it rendered. Further, the prosperity and increase of our mercantile marine intimately affected and stimulated other important industries, such as shipbuilding and its allied trades. The increase in British coal-mining during the past few years has to a large degree been caused by the increase in our Mercantile Fleet. The increase in British tonnage for the past five years, it has been estimated, makes a present annual demand for British coal of about 6,000,000 tons. We should not put a tax on the mercantile marine which would hinder its proper development. He did not wish to labour the matter at length, but he felt that the trade was of such great importance that the House must look at this from the national point of view, and, further, inasmuch as the light dues which the shipowner paid provided for the safety and protection of the Imperial Navy, they ought to be an Imperial charge.

*MR. MADDISON (Burnley) said he could not remember a Bill that had been more fortunate than that before the House. All Motions for rejections had disappeared, and for this he was not sorry, as he thought the Bill on its merits deserved a Second Reading. But it was singular to find the hon. Member for the Newton Division of Lancashire, after putting down a Motion to reject it, giving the Bill his enthusiastic support. He confessed that when he was in the House seven years ago he voted against a similar measure, but from the very moment that he had voted he felt that he had given a wrong vote. There were two grounds upon which he supported this Bill. He did not regard it as a mere shipowners' Bill; if it had been he would have recorded his vote against it. He did not take the hon. Member for Stockton quite seriously in this matter. The hon. Member in season and out of season told them of the miserable condition of shipowners, but he did not believe that the hon. Member even took himself seriously. The hon. Member for the Tyneside Division gave the reason which had induced him (Mr. Maddison) to vote for this Bill, namely, that it was economically sound to free an industry from taxation at the source whenever possible, because otherwise the consumers were penalised. When a great country like ours depended as much upon its shipping as we did, it was desirable that everything should be made as cheap as possible. The hon. Member for Brighton expressed some regret that we could not differentiate between the foreign and British shipowner. He knew that there was no difference made now, and they wanted every possible ship, whether British or foreign, to come into our ports. No ship could come here without doing some good to the country, and therefore it must be clearly understood that he should support this Bill on the distinct understanding that the abolition of these light dues applied to foreign as well as to British ships. There was also the other point that there was really no chance of the coast being efficiently lighted until it was made a national matter. At present it was inequitable; the capital value of the Navy was tremendous, but it paid nothing towards the lighting of the coast; the shipowners paid that. Yet one of the primary functions of these lights was to protect the Navy. Up to the present the shipowners had tried to get proper representation on the Board of Trinity House and the other boards regulating the lighting of the ocean highways. The analogy of the lighting of the railroad was a false one because a railway was a private monopoly. In his opinion a real case had been made out for putting the cost of the lighting of the coast upon the nation and making the Government responsible. He did not expect the President of the Board of Trade, who had supported a similar Bill last year, to have that freedom which he had as a private Member of the House, and he did not therefore consider that his voting against this Bill would show any inconsistency. There was £500,000 involved in this question which must be taken from somewhere. A great deal of money was required for social reforms of various kinds, but against that there were the two arguments—first, that the safety of life was the greatest social reform that could be imagined, and, secondly, that it was economically sound to free the consumer from imposts wherever possible. The question of taxation, however, was a very wide one, and some of them believed that all or at any rate most of the taxes should be paid by the land. If giving a Second Reading to this Bill meant its passing this year, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have to find half a million more money, he candidly admitted he would not have been able to support it, because in that case they would have had to take into account the various demands that had already been made, and see whether money could be allocated for this purpose. In this particular case, however, he saw no difficulty in voting for the Second Reading, because by so doing they could affirm its principle, and it could then take its place in that long procession of demands which were seeking relief from the Treasury. On these grounds he should vote for the Second Reading.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon) said he need hardly say that he was in great sympathy with the shipowners of this country, representing, as he did, a constituency in which every other man was interested in shipping. He had been reminded that he supported a Bill of this kind before, and that no doubt was the case, but he had to look not only to the principle of the Bill, but to its practical effect. There was no use giving a Bill a Second Reading unless they were prepared to carry it out. This was not an abstract Resolution affirming a principle upon which to found a Bill in future. If hon. Gentlemen would look at this Bill they would see that it proposed to abolish light dues as from the first day of January, 1907. He would like hon. Members who supported the Bill, and with whose views he fully sympathised, to consider what the position would be if it was carried into law. If it were carried there would be no light dues after January 1st, 1907. But where was the money for the maintenance of the lights to come from? It was said that the Bill was promoted in the interest of humanity. Surely it was not in the interest of humanity that they should abolish light dues and leave the lighthouses without any light at all. The previous Bill provided where the money was to come from, but this was a Bill simply to abolish light dues.

SIR ROBERT ROPNER said the promoters were perfectly well aware that if the Bill were read a second time no effect could be given to it by January 1st next. The object of having the Bill read the second time was to show that feeling in the House was in favour of abolishing the dues, and it would remain to the Chancellor of the Exchequer next year to make arrangements for carrying out the proposal.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said there was a great difference between an expression of opinion and a definite Bill. After all, the House was a business assembly, or it ought to be, and it should not give the Second Reading to a Bill unless it meant it. Did any one really mean this Bill? The hon. Baronet who introduced it said he did not mean it; that all he meant was that it should be taken as a pious expression of opinion as to what ought to be done. The Board of Trade would be delighted to help the shipping industry, but the question they had to face was that of finding the money. If the Bill were carried they would have to go to the Treasury and convince them. And would any one tell him where the money was to be found? Was the coal tax to be re-imposed? Was the penny still to be left on the tea duty? Was the half a million for the reduction of the National Debt to be diverted to the purpose of the Bill? [AN HON. MEMBER: Take it off the Army or the Navy.] That was a question to be dealt with when they were considering the Army or the Navy. He would turn to some of the arguments used in support of this Bill. It was said that there was no great nation in the world that imposed these light dues, but there was not much in that, because those other countries could raise a considerable taxation upon their over-sea trade. That was a burden upon trade, and had the effect of restricting the shipping trade, and, indeed, was probably much more disastrous to shipping than any light dues imposed by us. He was certain that those who supported the Bill did not wish this country to follow the example of other countries in that respect. With regard to the Suez Canal shares argument, he held a strong feeling that the Canal dues were extravagantly high, but that was rather a reason for appealing for a reduction in those dues. He should like to know whether those who represented shipping which passed through the Suez Canal were prepared to say they would not put forward any further claims for reduction of the dues if the light dues on the British coast were abolished. Would any representative of Suez Canal shipping be prepared to say that now? If he would he should be rather surprised. Another argument that had been advanced was that these light dues protected the ships that did not use our ports. That was equally true of France. The French lights protected German ships passing by, but Germany did not contribute anything to the upkeep of those lights. As a matter of fact the argument was absurd, because what happened in our own case? Foreign shipping contributed something like £150,000 or £160,000 to the upkeep of the lights around the coast, whereas in the case of France the whole burden fell on the French taxpayer. The proposal, therefore, was to impose upon the British taxpayer a burden a considerable proportion of which came in the first instance from the pockets of the foreigner. That was a proposition which came from hon. Members who wanted to tax the foreigner for British industries. He agreed with his hon. friend the Member for Scarborough, whom he congratulated on his maiden speech, that the burden did not really come out of the pockets of the shipowners, nor even of the shipping industry, but really fell upon the consumer in this country. He further agreed that if they took it off, the relief in the long run would go into the pockets, not of the shipowner, but of the consumer. That was his belief. That was the way competition must inevitably work. The whole question was, Was the House prepared at the present moment to give a kind of mandate to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that on January 1st, 1907, he was to find £500,000 for the purpose of abolishing light dues? He did not think it was fair to pass the Bill unless they were prepared to face that question. The Government were not prepared at the present moment to find £500,000 for the purpose asked for. In another direction, however, the Government might be able to do something. There had been a good deal of criticism in the course of the debate of the administration of the lighthouses, and particularly of the system under which £500,000 was expended by a body which was not responsible either to the shipowners or to this House. He listened to the criticism passed by the hon. Member for North Down as to the neglect of the Commissioners of Irish Lights to light up a part of the coast, which he agreed was extremely dangerous, but he was powerless in the matter. Most of the criticisms had been passed upon the Irish lights. He was glad to hear for the sake of his profession that the responsible body was one on which there was no lawyer. He thought there was a great case for consideration as to shipowners having somebody more directly responsible either to public opinion or to the shipowners, and the Government were prepared to set up an inquiry into that matter. It had been said during the debate that one of his predecessors offered to do something, but that was the first time he had heard it. At any rate, he thought something ought to be done, and the Government were prepared to appoint a Commission for the purpose of looking into the whole management of the lighthouses of our coasts. That would cover a good many of the complaints which had been made as to the inadequacy of the lighting of our coasts. That was a matter which ought to be looked into, and that the Government proposed doing at the earliest possible moment, but until they got the Report of the proposed Commission he hoped the House would not pass the present Bill. In connection with a previous Light Dues Act something was done in the way of subsidising a system of apprenticeship for the supply to the Mercantile Marine of a larger number of British sailors. Nothing much came of that scheme, one reason being that the money was insufficient. He hoped something might be done in the next few weeks in regard to that, but he was not prepared to make any express promise. In the meantime he appealed to the shipowners and the House to be satisfied for the present with the investigation he had promised. His hon. friend the Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool was a great champion of economy, and he would ask him for his assistance in this matter. They were all economists until it came to the interest of their own constituents. He would, however, ask for his hon. friend's support that they should wait at any rate until these questions had been thoroughly sifted out. There ought to be a Commission appointed who would have regard to all the interests involved, and not merely those of the shipowners. He trusted the supporters of this Bill would be satisfied with the appointment of a Commission to go into the whole question of the lighting of our coasts, and more especially the management and the constitution of the bodies that performed the work at the present time. More could not really be expected from the Government. Of course, as was pointed out by the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day, his right hon. friend was not even responsible for the estimates of this year, and therefore he could not control expenditure. It would be unfair to his right hon. friend, therefore, in his first year of office, and in the special circumstances of this year, to call upon him to find another £500,000 for the abolition of light dues. He sincerely trusted the House would accede to his reasonable request in this matter.

*Mr. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.), said he was sure that the House had listened with satisfaction to the promise of the President of the Board of Trade to appoint a Royal Commission. He had for long felt that the lighting of our coasts was a national matter. The hon. Member for North Down had given a concrete illustration of how slowly Lighthouse

Boards proceeded, and he hoped that there would be no further delay in granting a lighthouse at the important part of the coast referred to by his hon. friend. As regarded the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners, while he believed they discharged their duties fairly well, the time had come when a more popularly elected body should be substituted, with more rapid and progressive methods of lighthouse work. It was time that the important duty of lighting the coasts was undertaken by the nation, and was discharged by a department directly responsible to this House.

SIR CHRISTOPHER FURNESS (Hartlepool) said he had been long enough in this House to remember the time when, if any matter affecting shipowners and shipping was introduced, it was as a rule most unfortunately considered. He readily recognised the great change that had taken place in regard to the shipping industry in this country since then. It was almost too late in the day to emphasise the fact that the great shipping industry was practically the only one this country had got of which they were really proud. He was speaking more particularly of the export trade of the country in which the shipping trade played so important a part. The other day a Bill was introduced in this House affecting shipowners, and they gave evidence of their readiness to support the President of the Board of Trade and the Government in every possible way. They had heard the view expressed by the President of the Board of Trade, and they fully recognised the position in which he was placed in regard to the question. The right hon. Gentleman had said that if this Bill passed, on the 1st of January, 1907 all the lighthouses on our coast would practically be in darkness. He wished to remind the President of the Board of Trade that, although that was a possibility, it was a very remote one. Even if the Bill passed without any alteration of the lines, Trinity House had already extracted sufficient money from shipowners not only to meet the cost of lighting the coast for the present year but also, by utilising the reserve fund, to carry on the work for another year at the present rate of expenditure, reckless, extravagant, and unbusinesslike as it was. This could be done without removing one penny more from the shipowners. Therefore they could easily alter the date from 1907 to 1908. The Government had promised, if this Bill were withdrawn, a Commission to inquire into the whole question. His opinion was that they had had too many Commissions already upon the matter. There had been four Committees and Commissions already, and all the Commissions that could meet would not get away from the fact that it was an injustice to the shipowning industry that they should pay not only for the lighting of the coast for their own vessels, but also the proportionate cost which ought to be collected from the Navy. Not only was this an injustice, but it had most injurious effects in other ways. They were still told they were going to be granted some relief or encouragement in regard to the question of expenditure, but he was one of those who contended that they were face to face with no policy strong enough in itself to encourage them to proceed with this Bill, because they felt that the British shipowner should no longer be placed under the injustice which at present existed. With regard to the Suez Canal dues, which had been alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman, he failed to see any connection between the two.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he never raised the question at all. He simply answered a question raised by an hon. Member opposite.

SIR CHRISTOPHER FURNESS said that having regard to the fact that we were the largest investors in the Canal, the Government ought to set a good example and encourage their co-owners to reduce the charges to a reasonable and legitimate rate. He thought it would be admitted that there had been no real argument used against the Bill. All the speeches they had heard up to the present admitted the reasonableness of the contention of the shipowners, and although he fully recognised the difficulties of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in finding the money necessary for all the demands made upon him, he thought they had a right to demand from the Government the payment of a fair share of the cost of lighting the coast on account of the Navy. If the Bill were sent to a Grand Committee the shipowners would be ready to agree in a friendly spirit to a date when it should come into operation.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) said he would like to say a few words upon this subject, with which he had been connected during a part of his public career. The Bill had one advantage from a purely Party point of view. As a Unionist, he looked forward with some anxiety to the use that might be made of any surplus that might accrue to the Treasury of a Radical Chancellor of the Exchequer. One effect of this Bill would be to reduce that surplus by about £500,000, and so far he felt tempted to vote for the Bill. But he was afraid that course might involve a certain amount of inconsistency, because he had on previous occasions opposed any proposal of this kind. This question was first brought before his notice when he was serving his apprenticeship as President of the Board of Trade. He served that apprenticeship under the late Lord Farrer, who although he was nominally his subordinate, yet was, as the permanent head of the office, one of the ablest men he had ever come into contact with in public life, and no doubt he had a great influence upon his views at that time. Mr. Farrar, as he then was, was a Radical and free-trader—a very logical and consistent free-frader, of a different school from that with which they were now acquainted. He was not at all afraid of making necessary reforms. He was of opinion that the management of the lighthouse system of this country by the Trinity House was a most admirable example of that kind of service, and might properly be imitated by other Departments of the State. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had said something which implied that the Trinity House was a non-representative institution, and was unfitted for work of this kind, and that the work was done expensively and inefficiently. Thirty years ago Lord Farrer held a totally different opinion, and nothing had happened since, in his judgment, which would justify them in taking a different view from Lord Farrer's. The Trinity House management of the lighthouses combined the advantages of the advice and knowledge of experts in these matters and the efficient control of the Government Department, because the finance of the Lighthouse Board was certainly governed by the President of the Board of Trade, and therefore he could influence their policy most effectively. One objection to this Bill was that it would inevitably be followed by a change of that system, and the transfer of this great business to a Government Department. He had spent the greater part of his public life in Government Departments, but he retained sufficient suspicion of them to entertain a certain fear of casting on them duties which they were not well qualified to undertake. At least they would be losing more and more that assistance and advice which could only be given by private individuals, and which was stimulated by private interests. He should think it would be a real misfortune if this change were made, and if the lighting of the coasts, which by the common consent of every impartial person had been admirably performed by the Trinity House, were handed over to a Government Department which, in the first instance, at any rate, must be insufficiently equipped with the necessary information and, he was certain, would not be economical. He did not think it would be found in the long run an advantage to the country that the cost of the lighthouse service should be very considerably raised, as he was certain it would be if the private assistance and advice now given were lost. They had been told that they ought to carry this Bill as a matter of justice. The hon. Member for Hartlepool did not press this claim upon that ground alone, but also upon the universally recognised virtues of the shipping interest. With these extraordinary qualifications it was thought that a small subsidy—a dole it used to be called in the last Parliament—of £500,000 a year should be presented to these gentlemen. He had the highest respect for the shipping interest, but he could not admit that they were entitled to any special advantages.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Because they are opposed to your policy.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said he thought, on the contrary, that the great majority of the shipowners were heartily with him. At all events, the great shipping port of Liverpool had returned to this House a majority of its Members, in spite of Chinese labour, entirely favourable to his view., The hon. Member should not insinuate improper motives. He gave the hon. Member credit for absolute sincerity and disinterestedness, and he was sure the hon. Gentleman would give him credit for equal honesty.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Hear, hear.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (continuing) said that with regard to the suggestion that it was unjust to put this tax upon the shipowners, would it be more just to put it on the inland taxpayers and ratepayers? Surely it was desirable as a principle in all taxation that as far as possible the first incidence of any tax should be borne by the people who benefited most from it. As the shipping industry was the chief beneficiary in this particular case, he should have thought it had been better that, in the first instance at any rate, the shipping industry should pay these dues. The shipowners were able to distribute the cost, and sometimes an additional profit, upon the freighters of the ships. There was an analagous case in the removal of the turnpike dues and the imposition of all dues upon local authorities in connection with highways. He believed that that change was adopted with general assent, but he had always had considerable doubt as to whether the change was wise or whether it had operated satisfactorily. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no."] At any rate he held that old-fashioned opinion. Time had shown that the heavy charge now laid upon the local rates for the repair of the roads was unfair in its incidence. When he saw the change which was coming over them in reference to the improvements of locomotion and more especially the increase of motor cars and motor traffic of all kinds, he did think it was extremely unfair that some country village should be heavily taxed for the pleasure traffic of visitors who might run through the village and who had no interest in local circumstances. He thought no serious injury had been shown to have resulted from the placing of this tax in the first place upon those who chiefly benefited by the service rendered, and it would be a disadvantage to deprive ourselves of the valuable services of the Trinity House authorities. Therefore he he should vote against the Bill. The Government had given them the usual advice—they were to go as they pleased. The appointment of a Commission was merely an excuse, to which they had become accustomed within the last two months, for indecision on the part of the Government. The Government had a larger majority than any other Government had ever had in our history, a greater majority and consequently greater indecision.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) said he was not surprised that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had opposed the Bill, for he believed in taxing the foreigner. The President of the Board of Trade agreed with the right hon. Gentleman on this occasion, and opposed the Bill in order that we might continue to tax the foreigner. He and his friends did not believe in taxing the foreigner in this or in any other matter. The position of the economists who opposed the Bill was hardly reasonable. What he wanted to do when he asked for economy was to stop unproductive expenditure. In the case of this Bill it was not contended that anything of that kind could be done. It was a question whether the burden should be shifted from one shoulder to another. There could be no saving; the money was paid in any case. The question was—who should pay? If the shipowner paid it was most unfair that the Navy of this country should contribute nothing. The President of the Board of Trade had made no reply on that point. That made out a case for the Bill at the start. If the shipowners paid they also paid for the ships and navies of all other countries which passed along our coasts. That was a most unreasonable state of affairs. His right hon. friend had abandoned that position. He seemed to say that the consumers paid, and that they were in the long run the tax-payers. If that were so this Bill would not make any difference from the economic point of view. The present plan was admitted to be a very bad one from the point of view of international difficulties. Therefore, while we should save no money by continuing the present system, we should continue to have those international difficulties which hampered trade and therefore diminished the prosperity of the country. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham opposed the Bill, that was to him rather an argument for supporting it, for the right hon. Gentleman had undoubtedly used arguments in opposing the Bill with which they were altogether too familiar. The constituency which returned him contained, he supposed, more shipowners than any other, and they were almost unanimous, so far as he had been able to ascertain, in opposing the other proposals of the right hon. Gentleman to which reference had been made, and they were quite unanimous in supporting this Bill for the reasons which he had briefly stated. He thought the Bill would add nothing to the burden of the whole community, but it would undoubtedly free our international trade from obstacles to which it was exposed by our present vicious system.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.) said he was going on this occasion to support the Government, because it had been proved through the whole debate that there was absolute need for inquiry. Subsequently the Government might intervene. He protested against this burden being taken off the shipowners and placed on the State. The Labour representatives had from time to time made representations that measures for social and industrial reforms should be introduced, and they had been met with the argument that the Government were not able to find the money. On both sides of the House there were hon. Gentlemen who wished to relieve those who could pay from a burden of £500,000 per annum. A little while ago, when he was pleading that aged people who had been working for the greater part of their lives should get pensions, he was met with the answer that the Government had no money. The common people formed the bulk of the nation, and they deserved first consideration in matters of this kind. If this burden was removed from the shipowning community and put on the State, had they any guarantee that there would be any reduction in freights? He was of opinion that when a particular section of the community were relieved of their burdens the consumer never did benefit. Case after case could be quoted in proof of that statement. The burden, after all, was not so great as the shipowners would lead the House to believe. The President of the Board of Trade had stated that no less than £160,000 of the £500,000 was paid by foreign shipowners. He believed the interests that bore the burden at present were well able to pay. The Government ought to consider what they were going to do as to the pledges regarding social reform made during the General Election. He hoped hon. Members on the Ministerial Benches would accept the position outlined by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, and that they would vote for an inquiry, but not for this Bill.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he regarded the proposal of the President of the Board of Trade to appoint a Commission as a polite method of hanging up the question. He would be glad if he and his hon. friends who represented shipping communities could accept the proposal as satisfactory, but he hoped they would press the Motion for the Second Reading to a division.

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 142; Noes, 169. (Division List No. 68.)

AYES

Acland-Hood, Rt.Hn.SirAlexF.
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Ashley, W. W.
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barker, John

Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Bertram, Julius
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, Sir John T. (Cheshire)
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clynes, J. R.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cory, Clifford John
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dixon, Sir Daniel
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Ferens, T. R.
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fletcher, J. S.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Haddock, George R.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Higham, John Sharp
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Jackson, R. S.
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Joyce, Michael
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich)
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Liddell, Henry
Lupton, Arnold
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maclean, Donald
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Malley, William
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton-under-Lyne
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Starkey, John R.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Torrance, A. M.
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, A. (Elgin and Nairn
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, Hon. C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wolff. Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Robert Ropner and Mr. Walter Rea.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Alden, Percy
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Non. Herbert Henry
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barnard, E. B.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boland, John
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Burke, E. Haviland-
Byles, William Pollard
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cawley, Frederick
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Channing, Francis Allston
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, W.
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Sir Wm J. (S. Pancras, W.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crossley, William J.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doughty, Sir George
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, Hamar (York)

Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen, W.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hooper, A. G.
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Illingworth, Percy H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.SirJohn H.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lea,Hugh Cecil (St.Pancras, E.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Marnham, F. J.
Meagher, Michael
Menzies, Walter
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nicholls, George
Norman, Henry
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor,James (Wicklow,W.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford,E.)
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robertson,SirG.Scott (Bradf'rd
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann,Chas.E. (Manchester)
Sears, J. E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Steadman, W. C.
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thornton, Percy M.
Toulmin, George
Walsh, Stephen
Weir, James Galloway
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley,George (York,W.R.)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J.W. (Worcestersh.N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Harold Cox and Mr. Wardle.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. BRIGHT (Oldham) said the Bill, the Second Reading of which he had the honour to move, had been before the House on many occasions, and had passed this stage no fewer than six times. It was rather a reflection on the business powers of the House that under such circumstances it had not found a place on the Statute Book of the realm. The object of the Bill was not greatly to alter the present law or the general custom relating to rating, but to introduce uniformity and certainty into what had become, owing to some legal decisions, a very uncertain matter. The general practice throughout the country in the past had been for engines, boilers, and shafting, such machinery as passed with the freehold, to be rated. but, except on one or two occasions, textile machinery had never been rated On one or two occasions, where authorities had desired to rate machinery, it had been laid down by the Judges that the actual machinery should not be rated, but "taken into account." That was a very indefinite phrase, and no one knew exactly how it was to be "taken into account." He represented a town which was, he supposed the greatest centre of the cotton spinning industry—a town in which there was a very large number of enormous factories, containing a vast amount of valuable machinery, and the result of rating that machinery would be almost to double the rates of those factories. He was sure the local authorities had no desire to do that—the Chamber of Commerce and every one with influence was against any such thing and in favour of this Bill. The same applied to all the manufacturing towns in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and it was the feeling of proprietors of mills and of the directors of mill owning companies, as well as of representative working men, that this Bill should be passed. There was nothing revolutionary in what he proposed, as the Bill was in consonance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation of 1901, which laid it down that in estimating the rental value of hereditaments occupied for trade, business, or manufacturing purposes there should be excluded from the assessment any increased value arising from machinery, tools, and appliances that were removable from the place. The rating of machinery would be very disastrous in its effects on the industry of such towns as he represented, and it might have the effect of driving manufacturers to remove their factories north of the Tweed as in one case had already been done. If the rating of machinery were to become general, a very enormous burden would be thrown on industry, and, if cotton-spinning machinery were to be rated, why not agricultural machinery, printing presses, mineral water machines, and machines for coffee and chocolate grinding—in fact, everything which was used in premises for the sake of doing trade in the places in which the machinery was used? The Bill was strictly in accordance with the law in Scotland and Ireland. The whole difficulty was really raised in the first place in a small country town where there was but one factory, and the agricultural community naturally wished to obtain as much rate as possible from that factory. It sought to do so by taxing the machinery, but if that course became a recognised system throughout the country there would be no extension of industry in rural districts. Surely it was a great advantage to have the mills in country places with plenty of fresh air rather than in crowded centres in vast dismal smoky towns as at present? But if the authorities were to be allowed to rate them heavily the industries would never extend into country districts. He hoped the House would again read the Bill a second time. Had it not been for the prolixity of the speeches of hon. Members on previous occasions he felt sure the Bill would have become law ere this, and he earnestly hoped that that afternoon they would not suffer from the same affliction.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Bright.*)

MR. J. JOHNSON (Gateshead) said that, in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, he would like to point out that the title was absolutely misleading and that in many instances it had misled hon. Members of the House. It professed to be a Bill for taxation of machinery, but in reality it was a Bill for the exemption of certain machinery from rating. They had been informed by the mover of the Bill that it had been read six times already, and would have passed long since but for the prolixity of hon. Members. But the hon. Gentleman had not added the information that on each occasion there had been a diminishing majority in favour of the Bill, showing that the objection to it was growing. He was bound to say that he thought the arguments advanced in favour of the Bill were very fallacious, and he could not understand why unfixed machinery should be especially exempted from rating. He might refer hon. Members to the Tyne boiler case in the Court of Appeal, in which Lord Esher, the Master of the Rolls, in 1886, dealt with the question of what was fixed machinery. The decision then arrived at had not been since altered. His complaint against the Bill, however, was that it proposed to narrow the basis of taxation rather than enlarge it, and his belief was that the effect of passing the Bill would be to increase the burden on the poorer members of the community. He was perfectly willing to argue the question that the present mode of taxation was fallacious and that taxes should be spread in a different manner. Certainly he would put more on the land, because he believed it was never intended that it should be held as a monopoly by, and for the advantage of, the privileged few. He could not conceive why an employer who by his forethought, patience, industry, and energy had built up a large concern should have his industry *per se* heavily rated. But they were not dealing with the wider question that afternoon; they were dealing with the narrower view, and he had to point out that the inevitable result of relieving machinery of taxation would be to transfer the burden to the poor householder and small shopkeeper. In the constituency he had the honour to represent, the increased burden which would be created by the Bill would fall upon the poor labouring class. Let them try and understand the effects the exemption of machinery would have in that district. His constituency was largely working-class. Ninety per cent. of the inhabitants belonged to the working classes, and he had been given to understand from inquiries he had made that the effect of the Bill would be to increase the rates by 4d. or 5d. in the £. It was well known that about the present time the rates in Gateshead were very heavy, especially the education rate, and if, in addition to their present burden, exemption of machinery from rating was introduced, their rates would be heavy indeed. He had been given to understand also that in Jarrow, another large industrial centre, the effect of the Bill would be to add another 4d. in the £ to the ratepayers' burdens, and he had also been informed that in Sunderland it would mean a similar increase. Fourpence or fivepence in the £ might seem to be a small matter, but with the already increased burdens of taxation it became a very serious one. There were other instances he could mention, all of which indicated that the passage of the Bill would be a very serious matter indeed especially for northern districts. Before allowing such a Bill to come into operation they should have some general scheme of taxation; it was not fair to exempt the capitalists by the narrow specious process suggested and place their responsibilities upon the shoulders of the workers. The Bill would mean higher rents, and everyone knew that the workman's rent was already sufficiently high—higher than his means allowed in many cases. Taxation was steadily going up; they could not have any privileges except they were prepared to pay for them. He would be the last man to deprecate an increase in expenditure if they were to get a corresponding amount of advantage from it, but in the present instance they were going to take a burden off the backs of the classes better able to bear it and to place it upon the backs of the working men who were less able to bear it and would not derive any benefit from it. The Bill dealt with a very small portion of a very large question. He knew of no Bill introduced into this House which would call for greater consideration, an expenditure of more time, and keener analysis than that for the re-adjustment of the taxation of the country. The point he wished to make was that, whatever might be their special and peculiar view as to the exact place where the burden of taxation ought to rest, there was no doubt that the discussion of the rating question would take up a great deal of time, and would require keen analysis and careful consideration. Why should they tinker with a small point like this, and why should a matter of this kind be raised in a partial manner and not straight out? He hoped the House was not prepared to pass this Bill. A number of hon. Gentlemen professed to be very anxious for the well being of the community in regard to taxation, but when they came to look into the proposal they found that it was simply one to remove taxation from their own shoulders. This Bill might rightly be called a manufacturers' Bill. Constantly in this House claims were made for certain exemptions in favour of this, that, or the other class, but he did not think that the class who desired this exemption deserved to have their present claim taken into consideration or that they had made out any case. The case which had been brought forward had received diminished support, and as soon as it was understood that the Bill was to reduce the rating of a particular class he thought less support than ever would be given to it. He did not wish the House to pass the Bill under a misapprehension; it must be distinctly understood that it was a Bill by which it was intended to take a burden from the manufacturers and place it upon the small shopkeepers and workers who in a very large number of cases were already overburdened. [Cries of "No."] Hon. Members said "No" and therefore evidently this was a matter of opinion, and he thought his opinion was as good as that of other hon. Members. Why should the capitalists and the machine owner be exempted from this burden, and why should it be placed upon the small shopkeepers and the workers? He entered an emphatic protest against the Bill, and hoped hon. Members would realise its important and far-reaching consequences. Without further wearying the House he had the pleasure of moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) seconded the Motion for the rejection of the Bill, although he confessed that the object of the promoters had his sympathy. He felt obliged, however, to go into the Lobby against the measure. He was perfectly prepared to admit that manufacturers had grievances upon the subject, but, like the hon. Member who had moved the rejection, he felt that if machinery were exempted the rates would have to be met out of somebody else's pocket. He did not exactly know, and it was difficult to tell in different parts of the country, upon whose shoulders the burden would fall. The hon. Member for Gateshead seemed to think that the burden would fall upon the small shopkeeper and workers, and he thought that that was likely to be the case. Indeed he did not see how it could be otherwise. On the other hand, he recognised that in the country districts the burden would fall upon the farmers who were cultivating the land. He thought that this debate would bring out a very important point to which the mover had referred in his speech when he quoted cases, within his knowledge, where the manufacturer had had to remove his works and plant, owing to the heavy rates charged upon his machinery in the district in which he carried on business. He had always maintained that the rating of machinery was hard, and therefore the Bill had his sympathy, but he felt that if rates upon machinery were done away with they were bound to fall upon the produce of that machinery. He considered the rating of machinery thoroughly wrong, in the same way as he considered the rating of land thoroughly bad. It was, in his opinion, a question not of who but of what paid the rate. It might be called the rating of machinery, but it did not matter to the manufacturer or to the local authority who paid the rates, or whether the sum was raised by a charge placed upon the article which the manufacturer was producing, or was levied in the way of rates. He held that the rating of machinery was a tax upon the article produced, and therefore he considered it was bad. The same thing might be said about land, and it did not matter whether the money was levied by way of rate upon land or upon a quarter of corn which was grown upon the land. He had always said that the rating of any property in the country fell upon the industry and the people engaged in it. He considered, however, that there should be legislation with regard to the whole of the question of rating, and he did not think the Report of the Commission appointed by the last Conservative Government had in any way solved the problem. He thought it one of the chief mistakes of the last Conservative Government that they did not deal entirely with this rating question and go to the very root of it. This tax made it all the harder for manufacturers in this country to compete with their foreign rivals. But to call upon the tenants of small houses in towns and upon farmers in the country to bear the burden was unjust. He believed that the whole question ought to be thoroughly gone into and radically altered, and he hoped the Government would take the matter into consideration and see whether they could not devise some better scheme for obtaining rates than from this source.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. J. Johnson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. STUART (Sunderland) said he would not have intervened in this debate had it not been for the fact that he was the only Member present who was a Member of the Royal Commission which sat for a number of years upon the subject of local taxation. He recognised that this Bill was founded upon a clause of the Report of the Commission which was unanimously agreed to, or at all events was agreed to by an overwhelming majority. The Commission came to the conclusion that the rating of machinery, as at present carried out, had many disadvantages, and he thought it would be a very great advantage to very many hon. Members if they would look into the historical aspect of the question, which was dealt with in the Report, which threw an immense light upon the whole rating question. One of the reasons which caused them to make the Report they did about the rating of machinery was the difference of practice which prevailed in different parts of the country, and resulted in the hampering of competitive trade. Not only was there a difference of practice throughout the country in regard to rating, but the whole law of rating, and especially that in respect of machinery, was based largely upon decisions given by the courts of law, a piecemeal sort of law, which was in an uncertain and disorganised condition. Another point was that they felt that this rating of machinery was a tax upon trade, and that inasmuch as it fell largely upon some branches of trade and not upon others it was very desirable that the matter should be rectified in the general interests of the manufacturers of the country. But while they took that view and made that Report, the question to which he wished to call the attention of the House was that this particular portion of their Report was to be taken in connection with the other large and important proposals which they made affecting the whole general law of rating. They were put there to consider the law and question of rating as a whole and they did so—he did not say with all the success that they could have wished. They touched upon the question of how much the Poor Law and the education rates ought to fall upon the local authority or the central authority. Five of them, including Lord Balfour of Burleigh, made a Report in favour of the rating of ground values, and the House would see that when the Commission made their Report they had before them the general reorganisation of the rating conditions of the country. They proposed this change in the rating of machinery as part of the large system of reorganisation which they put forward. Whether it should be taken by itself or not was a very different question, and he thought that the House would do well to deal with the question of local taxation from a general point of view. There was no question in the country which was more important than local taxation except the question of general taxation. Then there was the question in regard to contributions in aid of local rates. These were subjects which were not generally attractive to people, and it was difficult to raise any interest in them, and the ratepayers did not know how the incidence of rating fell. There was, for instance. the compound householder system, which did not relieve rates but cloaked them; but even taking the rates not under the compound system there was a great deal of difficulty on the part of competent authorities in deciding who really paid the rates. He thought he had said enough to show the great vista which was before the House of Commons in regard to these rating questions. If the Government and the House of Commons would wake up and deal with the real essence of the general rating question they would, he thought, be rendering a genuine service to the country. He should be glad to hear from the Government some undertaking that they would deal with his question at no distant date.

*MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan) heartily supported the Bill. This country had to keep pace with the march of invention and improvement which was going on in the midst of our rivals in Germany and the United States. The

Bill removed an obstruction in the resources of competitive trade. Taxation should depend not on the machinery that made a business profitable, but on the general prosperity of the community as a whole. Let them tax prosperity, but not those things by which prosperity was attained.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) thought the House was very much indebted to his hon. friend the Member for Sunderland for the explanation he had given the House as to the work of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. Although he had no decided objection to this Bill, there were many Members of the House who had. He certainly, however, had an objection to its proceeding at the present moment and under present conditions. As the hon. Member for Sunderland had justly said, the principle raised by the Bill was part of a very large scheme of local taxation. He reminded supporters of the Government that when the late Government dealt with agricultural rating and clerical tithes the opposition then offered was due to the selection of special features of taxation for treatment tending particularly to favour the friends of the late Government. That was one of the fundamental grounds of their opposition to the proposals of the late Government. No one could deny, however, that in a measure of this kind the responsibility ought to rest upon the Government and not upon an individual Member. In his own district they rated machinery, including that appertaining to collieries. They had not lowered the basis of taxation; they had only narrowed down the area of taxable property. The expenditure went on just the same, and where were they to find the money to meet the necessary expenditure in the locality? They had to impose additional taxation on the other property of that locality, that was to say upon the houses of the working men; men who had struggled to and had become owners of their own houses. By this Bill they would exempt the property of those who were able to pay in order to throw it upon the shoulders of men who were not able to bear it. The fact that the tax on machinery was reduced would also tend to put up the rents of working men in the locality, The rents in the county of Northumberland, and especially in Newcastle, were probably much higher than the rents in any other industrial centre, and the effect of this Bill would be to increase the rent of those properties and increase the rents of the working men in the rural and urban districts of Northumberland. He objected upon that ground, so far as his district at all events was concerned, to the passing of this measure.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln) said that all the opponents of the Bill agreed that unfixed machinery was not a fit subject for rating, but they found various grounds why, in spite of agreeing with the principle of the Bill, they considered it was one that must be rejected. He was inclined to think that the substantial argument was that the whole question of rating should be dealt with together. He did not yield to anyone in asking the Government to deal with the question on the lines of the Rating Commission. He thought he had heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other night say that he wanted to adjust the whole question of rating, but he did not see why they should not vote on this Bill to-day because the Government at some future time proposed to deal with the whole problem of Imperial and local finance. Hon. Members would never have urged that the question of the taxation of land values, could not be dealt with separately apart from the general readjustment of rating, and if the House threw out this Bill to-day, it would be said, when the general settlement came, that the House had changed its mind on the question of the rating of machinery. They should do the just thing, and he thought, for his part, that this Bill was a just one. There was a clear distinction between fixed machinery, which might increase the letting value of the establishment, and the loose machinery lying about which did not. And accepting the main principle of the Bill, he thought it a fair and moderate proposal to exempt that unfixed machinery from taxation. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck division of Northumberland had said that if they exempted this machinery from taxation, the burden would be placed upon the house property in the locality. But if this Bill was just, he did not see that people had a right to perpetuate an injustice by throwing it out. One strong argument which induced him to vote in favour of the Bill was that the case decided in the House of Lords last year had increased the anxiety which prevailed in the present state of the law. The whole practice of the law was sufficiently uncertain at the present time with regard to the rating of machinery, and that uncertainty would only be increased by that decision, and while they were waiting for a general readjustment, assessment committees might be doing real injustices in the meantime. That was one ground why he had decided to press for the Bill this afternoon.

*MR. MYER (Lambeth, N,) said the framers of this Bill had thought well, but not sufficiently well, on this subject. How were they going to draw a distinction between fixed and unfixed machinery? What was fixed machinery? It was very difficult to define. He presumed that most hon. Members thought it consisted of boilers and engines. What was happening to boilers and engines to-day? In some particular town they might possibly have 100 works each with an engine and boiler worth £1,000. To-day, with the introduction of electric and hydraulic power, the whole of that machinery might disappear in a year or two. Under those circumstances what was the value of it, and what would become of the power to rate that machinery? Instead of having separate engines and boilers, works would be run from some large distributing centre, and were they going to place the rate upon the central distributing station? The whole idea of differentiating between fixed and unfixed machinery was absurd. With regard to the extra rate falling upon workmen's dwellings, the statement would not hold water, because every landlord to-day was getting as much rent as he possibly could out of his tenants, and no matter what the rates might be, the landlord could not increase the rent. Therefore the argument that the rate would fall heavily upon the working classes was illusive. A large amount of the rateable value created would disappear in a very short time.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland) said that the hon. Member was perfectly accurate in what he said so far as it related to the town which he (Mr. Summerbell) had the honour to represent. The machinery in that town was rated at the present time, and if this Bill was passed into law it would increase the rates of the town 3d. or 4d. in the £. Everybody knew perfectly well that where the rates were increased the rents were also increased. If this Bill was passed to-day, the rates in his town would go up and the house property in the shape of workmen's rents would go up 6d. a week. He hoped the House would not pass the Bill.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said that if he thought it was going to raise the rents paid by the working classes he should vote against the Bill, but he did not think it would have any such effect. He thought the landlords had already got all they could out of the workmen, no matter what the rates might be. If they taxed loose working machinery they made it more difficult for the manufacturer to live; they drove him out of the district, lowered wages, and injured the working classes. By taking the tax off machinery they threw the expense on the great owners of property. This was a small step in the right direction. The effect of this Bill was to encourage industry and thereby to raise the condition of the working classes.

*MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire) said he supported the Bill because it was a small and practical step in the right direction. It was a moderate measure, the fundamental principle of which was to exempt from rating machinery which was not fixed and machinery which was only temporarily fixed. The hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill professed to be unable to see the distinction between the machinery which was not fixed and machinery which was. The distinction was an arbitrary distinction, but it was a distinction which had been made by this House, and in the Scottish Rating Act, passed four years ago, that very distinction had been put in. The promoters of the Bill desired to have in England the advantages already possessed in Scotland. It was almost a pity that the Bill did not go further, for he should like to see all the rating and taxing of machinery abolished. Machinery played a more and more important part in modern production, and they should encourage its use in every way, instead of penalising it. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division had argued that if machinery was exempted from rating, rates would be put upon the houses of the working classes. He could not agree with the hon. Member in that. He was opposed not only to the rating of machinery, but also to the rating of factory buildings and industrial buildings of every kind, including crofters' cottages in Scotland and the labourers' cottages in Ireland and even to the hut tax in Natal. He quite agreed with the observation made by the noble Lord the Member for the Horncastle Division that if they did this for certain industrial undertakings they should also do it for all. He would like to apply the same principle to agriculture, and to exempt from rating farm-buildings, hay sheds and all other agricultural improvements. He quite agreed that if they exempted all these things from rating they would have to find other things to rate. He was one of those who for many years past had advocated the fundamental reform of our valuation so as to base the whole taxation of landed property on the market value of the land and to leave all buildings and other improvements of every kind tax-free. Though he would continue to advocate that great reform, he was content to take this instalment now, and he would therefore support the Bill.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury) said he regretted that the promoters of this Bill had not circulated it till to-day—at least the Bill had not reached the office which he represented until to-day, and he should have thought that in an important matter like this they would have taken steps to circulate it as early as possible. He was in complete agreement with much that had been said. It was perfectly clear that the rating of machinery as at present carried on throughout the United Kingdom was a bad system and was not a uniform system. If this lack of uniformity was causing any grievance in any part of the country, they must, sooner or later, clear it up, and the sooner the better; but by this Bill, the House was being asked to proceed in the wrong way and to bring about a reform on a wrong system. They were asked to relieve a certain kind of machinery from further burdens. Those burdens would, naturally, have to be borne by somebody, and it was perfectly clear that in most cases they would fall as an increased burden on house property. The burden which was removed from the industry would fall as an increased burden upon the classes engaged in the industry, and he ventured to suggest that this would be merely a case of jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. Before they transferred the burden from the back of one set of producers on to the back of another set, they should consider how far they could embark on a system of monopoly rating. He thought the House would be well advised in not proceeding to a decision that afternoon, not that he opposed the Bill in principle, but because he thought there was a better way of dealing with the subject. The Government had announced their intention of dealing next year with the rating of land values. It was hoped that they might be able to introduce a Valuation Bill next session, and by that means to approach nearer to a solution of this great problem. He suggested that, if the Government did that, they would do something towards ultimately transferring the burden from the great machinery users on to the shoulders of the great monopoly owners. That, he believed, was the proper way to proceed. Meanwhile, it might be necessary that they should clear up some of the uncertainties which at present existed with regard to the rating of machinery; and if it should be necessary next year after the Government had introduced their measure to again bring this Bill before the House, he thought they might have it in a much amended form. If the House did proceed to a decision on the Bill that afternoon, the Government would have to propose a series of Amendmends which would materially alter its character.

And, it being Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS.

Bill to provide that no Prosecution under the Vaccination Acts shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Channing, Mr. Goddard, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Corrie Grant, and Mr. Bill.

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS BILL.

"To provide that no Prosecutions under the Vaccination Acts shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 192.]

INCOME TAX.

Select Committee appointed to inquire into and report upon the practicability of graduating the Income Tax, and of differentiating, for the purpose of the tax between permanent and precarious incomes.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. Beach, Mr. Brace, Mr. Bridgeman, Mr. Cavendish, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Evans, Mr. George Faber, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Hayden, Sir William Holland, Sir Seymour King, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. McKenna, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Rose, Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. Whittaker.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Whereupon Mr. Speaker, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at six minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, *7th May*, 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

The Marquess of Anglesey sat first in Parliament after the death of his kinsman.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Lord Tredegar's Supplemental Estate Bill [H.L.]. Judges' report received; Bill presented, and read 1^a.

Standing Orders Committee—Repor from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petitions for Bills by the Ritz Hotel Limited; John Cæsar Crellin; ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bills.

And that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Sutton District Water Bill ought to be dispensed with. Read, and agreed to.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Macclesfield and District Tramways; Midland Railway.

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in respect of the petition for additional provision in the following Bill:—Scottish Union and National Insurance [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with amendments.

Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Manchester Churches Bill [H.L.], Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.]; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Kent Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1.) Bill [H.L.]; Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2.) Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Willoughby de Broke and the Lord Dunboyne be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Mayo and the Viscount Falmouth; read, and agreed to.

Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.], Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Cathcart District Railway (Superfluous Lands) Order Confirmation Bill; North Berwick Corporation Order Confirmation Bill, Brought from the Commons.

Cathcart District Railway (Superfluous Lands) Order Confirmation Bill, (No. 73.); North Berwick Corporation Order Confirmation Bill (No. 74.) Read 1^a; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been read 2^a (The Lord Hamilton of Dalzell), and reported from the Committee.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools:—(1). Of teachers in schools at Phillack—Salmesbury—St. Peter's—and Ashton-under-Lyne; (2). Of parents and guardians of children at Salmesbury—and Ashton-under-Lyne (2).

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland, for the year, 1905.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE.

Final Report of the Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Science, etc. Vol. II. Minutes of Evidence, Appendices (II.-XIII.), and Index.

NATAL.

Correspondence relating to native disturbances in Natal.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3573. Egypt (Port Said and Suez).

No. 3574. Russia (Moscow).

No. 3575. Russia (Finland).

No. 3576. China (Swatow).

No. 3577. Turkey (Trebizond).

No. 3578. China (Hankow).

ARMY (MILITARY PRISONS).

Report on the discipline and management of the military prisons, 1905.

RAILWAY RETURNS.

Return relating to the railways of the United Kingdom for the year 1905. Preliminary statement.

EDUCATION COMMISSIONERS (IRELAND).

Annual Report for the year 1905.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

Sixty-seventh Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records.

RAILWAY RATES (PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT).

Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to inquire into and report whether preferential treatment is given by the railway companies in Great Britain to foreign and colonial, as compared with home, farm, dairy, and market garden produce. Report; Minutes of evidence, with appendices and index.

INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE.

Correspondence relative to the establishment of an international agricultural institute, with the Report of the British delegates and the Minutes of the proceedings at the International Conference on agriculture at Rome.

LICENSING STATISTICS.

Statistics as to the operation and administration of the laws relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors, for the year 1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF DURHAM).

Order made by the council of the county of Durham altering certain polling districts in the Chester-le-Street parliamentary division of the county.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904 (RHONDDA URBAN DISTRICT).

Order made by the urban district council of Rhondda, confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain shops within the district.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Mintue, dated 1st May, 1906, declaring British Central Africa, the East Africa Protectorate, Northern Nigeria, the Somaliland Protectorate, Southern Nigeria, and Uganda to be unhealthy places for the purpose of the Superannuation Acts, 1859 and 1876.

Treasury Minute, dated 1st May, 1906, granting a retired allowance to Mr. William Pearson, Staff Clerk, War Office.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.

University Court Ordinance, No. XIV. (Edinburgh No. 4) Institution of Degrees in Veterinary Medicine and Surgery and relative regulations. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 70.)

IMPORTS INTO CANADA.

Return respecting. Laid before the House (pursuant to Order of the 30th of March last), and to be printed. (No. 71.)

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee, that they have added the Earl Carrington to the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

COLONIAL MARRIAGES BILL [H.L]

A Bill to declare the law with respect to a marriage between a man and his deceased wife's sister domiciled in part of the British Possessions where such a marriage is legal. Was presented by the Lord Elgin (*E. Elgin and Kincardine*); read 1ª; to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Tuesday the 15th instant. (No.75.)

MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

EXTRADITION BILL [H.L.]

Orders of the Day for the Second Reading read, and discharged.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order); Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL.

Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

TURKEY AND EGYPT.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is able to give the House any additional information in regard to the Turco-Egyptian frontier.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): My Lords, I am in a position to give to your Lordships, who I know desire to have it as soon as possible, some further information with regard to the situation affecting the Turco-Egyptian frontier in continuation of the statement which I made a few days ago. The British Ambassador at Constantinople presented a Note to the Porte on Thursday last inviting the Sultan to agree to the demarcation by Great Britain and Turkey of the line from El Rafah to the head of the Gulf of Akabah on the basis of the telegram from the Grand Vizier to the Khedive of April 8, 1892, and pending a settlement to withdraw his troops from Tabah.

I venture here to give a short summary of the negotiations which have taken place. Early in the year Egyptian troops were sent in the ordinary course to occupy certain posts in the interior of the Sinai peninsula, including Tabah on the western coast of the Gulf of Akabah. On arrival at the latter post it was found that 150 Turkish troops were already in occupation. His Majesty's Government protested against the occupation by the Turks of Tabah, a place unquestionably within the Sinai peninsula, and pointed out to the Porte that if any doubt existed as to the frontier line a joint Delimitation Commission was the best solution of the question. On February 13 Lord Cromer reported that the Turkish commandant at Akabah was demanding the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops from the Faroun Island, an island in the northern part of the Gulf of Akabah. His Majesty's Ship "Diana" was instructed to proceed to Faroun to protect the Egyptian post there.

After further representations the Sultan decided to send two officers from Constantinople to inquire into the matter, and they left for Egypt on February 20th. It was hoped the Turkish Commissioners would discuss the matter, or form part of a Joint Commission of Delimitation. The Turkish Commissioners, however, left Cairo and proceeded to Beirut without having communicated with the Egyptian Government, the Khedive, or Lord Cromer. On March 21st the Turkish Ambassador made a communication to the effect that as Tabah was a dependency of Akabah no objection could naturally be made to the presence there of Turkish troops, and that it was consequently unnecessary to send officials from Egypt to institute an inquiry into the question. The Sultan then authorised Mukhtar Pasha to negotiate with the Government of Egypt, and His Majesty's Government agreed to the negotiations taking place at Cairo.

Mukhtar Pasha had an interview with the Khedive, and demanded on behalf of his Government that the boundary of the Sinai peninsula should run from El Rafah to Suez and from Suez to Akabah. The Khedive, in reply to these representations, suggested that the telegram of April 8th, 1892, should be taken as the basis of a settlement, that the line should run from El Rafah to Akabah, joining the coast three miles west of Fort Akabah, and that the remainder of the line of frontier should be determined by competent surveyors. The Grand Vizier's reply to the Khedive was to the effect that the Gulf of Akabah and the Sinai peninsula were outside the territory defined in the Imperial Firman, that the telegram of April 8th, 1892, only referred to the western side of the Sinai peninsula, that the interpretation of that telegram was a matter which only concerned the Imperial Ottoman Government, that Akabah had been adopted as the headquarters of the Mutessariflek of Akabah, and the hope was expressed that no occasion would be afforded for interference by any other Power

The delay, the extent of the demands which have been put forward by the Porte, and the tone and character of the Turkish communications to the Khedive have made it impossible to defer a settlement indefinitely, and that is why we are now pressing our original demand for a joint delimitation. I think I may claim on behalf of His Majesty's Government that they have shown great patience and moderation; but the latest developments of the Turkish demands if admitted would place Turkey in a position which would be a real danger not only to the freedom of the Suez Canal, but also to the liberties of Egypt and of the Khedivial dynasty. His Majesty's Government cannot be indifferent to such issues, and the importance of them makes it necessary that we should press for a settlement on the lines of the frontier of Egypt as it has existed undisputed and undisturbed from a period many years previous to British occupation.

The Note to which I have referred was drawn up before the violation of Egyptian territory at El Rafah. I mentioned on Tuesday that His Majesty's Ship "Minerva" had been sent to El Arish to ascertain whether the boundary pillars at El Rafah had actually been disturbed, and I regret to say that the report of the removal of the pillars has been confirmed by the captain of the "Minerva"; but as the Grand Vizier informed Sir N. O'Connor that a Commission would be sent to replace the pillars had they been disturbed, it does not appear necessary to make any representation on the subject at present. I need hardly remind your Lordships that the prime determining cause of the occupation in 1882 was that the condition of unrest in that country threatened danger to the Suez Canal, and it is not to be supposed that, having thus intervened to protect the Canal from danger coming principally from the western side, we shall now, twenty-four years after those events, be indifferent to similar dangers arising on the eastern side of the waterway.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair].

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

The **LORD CHANCELLOR** (Lord LOREBURN) said this Bill dealt with a very difficult subject, and he had received a variety of communications in regard to it. He had endeavoured to adopt those suggestions which seemed desirable in the form of the Amendments which appeared in his name on the Paper. The first Amendment, which he now moved, would have this effect, that the public trustee would not undertake any trust under a deed of arrangement for the benefit of creditors, nor the administration of any insolvent estate.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 13, after the word 'Act' to insert the words 'nor any trust under a deed of arrangement for the benefit of creditors, nor the administration of any insolvent estate.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3:—

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said the object of his Amendment was to have some formal record without which the estate was not to vest in the public trustee.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 29, after the word 'undertaking' to insert the words 'declaration in writing signed and sealed by him.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR explained that sub-section (3) provided that for the purposes of the administration of small estates the public trustee might exercise such of the powers and authorities of the High Court as might be conferred on him by rules under this Bill. The object of his Amendment was to authorise the authority who made the rules—the Lord Chancellor—to bestow those powers subject to such conditions as he might think right to impose. It was thought that some of the powers and authorities of the High Court which were to be conferred on the public trustee should not be so conferred without safeguards against their abuse.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 38, after the word 'Act' to insert the words 'subject to such conditions as may be imposed by the rules.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4:—

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said the object of his next Amendment was to provide that the public trustee might be appointed custodian trustee even though there was no vacancy in the number of original trustees.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 15, to leave out the word 'the' and to insert the words 'subject to rules under this Act the'; and after the word 'such' to insert the words 'and whether or not the number of trustees has been reduced below the original number.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*LORD FABER explained that the object of his Amendment was to enable trustees under a will, who had appointed the official trustee as custodian trustee, to act with him if they thought fit to do so. He hoped the Lord Chancellor would see his way to accept the insertion of the words proposed.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 27, after the word 'trustee' to insert the words 'jointly with the other trustees or trustee.'"—(*Lord Faber.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said it was quite obvious that the more interest the old trustees took in the trust the better it would be for everybody concerned. But the noble Lord's Amendment would go further than was anticipated. The sub-section in question provided that where the public trustee was appointed to be custodian trustee of any trust the property subject to the trust, and the right to transfer or call for the transfer of any shares, stock, or securities forming part of the trust property, should by virtue of this Act vest in the custodian trustee. It was now proposed by the noble Lord that if there were any other trustees the property should vest in them jointly. The title and right of the other trustees would depend on something other than this Act, and if the words suggested by the noble Lord were inserted, trustees who might not really be entitled to have the property vested in them at all might have it so vested by virtue of this Act. The danger of accepting the Amendment was that it might have ulterior effects quite beyond what the noble Lord wished. If the noble Lord would confer with him before the next stage of the

Bill he would endeavour to meet the substance of his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR moved to amend the proviso that a custodian trustee need not concur in nor perform any act the effect of which might be to vest in him property which might involve a personal liability on him in respect of calls or otherwise. He moved to substitute the word "shall" for "need." It had been pointed out that as the Consolidated Fund was liable to make good all sums required to discharge any liability which the public trustee, if he were a private trustee, would be personally liable to discharge, a custodian trustee should not be allowed to concur in any act the effect of which might expose him to liability.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 7, to leave out the word 'need' and insert the word 'shall.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said it was not reasonable to require that the custodian trustee should be obliged to inquire into the legality of every matter in which he was requested to concur, and the object of the new proviso which he now moved was to secure that where a request to concur was made in writing, signed by all the managing trustees and accompanied by a certificate from a duly qualified solicitor, not being a trustee, that the action was within the powers of the trust, the custodian trustee should be exonerated from all consequences of his concurrence. This proviso would conduce to business and give every practical safeguard.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 10, after the word 'otherwise' to insert as a new proviso the words 'and (b) where a request to concur is made in writing, signed by all the managing trustees, accompanied by a certificate from a duly qualified solicitor not being a trustee that the matter in which the custodian trustee is requested to concur is within the powers of the trust, the custodian trustee shall not be obliged to inquire into the legality of the matter, and shall be exonerated from all consequences of his concurrence if he acts in good faith.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

LORD ASHBOURNE did not object to the course proposed to be taken by the Lord Chancellor, but was disposed to think that the matter would require close consideration when they saw the Amendment incorporated in the clause. The question at once suggested itself—What was the good of the custodian trustee if he were bound to consent to all the things he was asked to do by the other trustees, and if he were to be satisfied with the certificate of the solicitor.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said he would be pleased if the matter were looked into. In point of fact, the frauds that had taken place had been largely perpetrated when there was only one trustee, and in secret without the knowledge of an independent solicitor. His Amendment gave a very effective safeguard, although he fully admitted that it did not afford absolutely incontrovertible security against peculation.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said the object of his next Amendment was to provide that the custodian trustee should not be liable if he acted in good faith.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 28, after the word 'trustee' to insert the words 'if he acts in good faith.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*LORD FABER, who had given notice to move the deletion of Sub-section 3 of Clause 4, and the insertion of the following new subsection—

(3) Any banking or insurance company or other body corporate may, if it consents to act as such, be appointed to be custodian trustee of any trust in the same manner as the public trustee may be so appointed, with power for such company or body corporate to charge and retain or pay out of the trust property by way of remuneration such fees as may be agreed, or in default of agreement fees not exceeding those chargeable by the public trustee as

custodian trustee, and the provisions of Sub-sections 1 and 2 of this clause shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to such company or other body corporate,

said that by this Bill those persons who were originally connected with the trust had power to appoint the public trustee as custodian trustee without going through any formality whatever; but, if an original trustee under a will desired to appoint a corporate body or a bank as custodian trustee, it was necessary to go through the formality of applying to the Court. He did not know why a difference should be made between a custodian trustee when he was an official, and a custodian trustee in the shape of a bank or insurance office. Since the Amendment had been put down, however, he had had a conversation with the noble and learned Lord in charge of the Bill. The Lord Chancellor had undertaken to give the matter his attention between this and the Report stage, and in the circumstances he would not move his Amendment.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR moved to leave out Sub-section (4). This sub-section provided that the section should apply to trusts whether created before or after the passing of this Act, but should not extend to —(*a*) any trust for religious purposes; or (*b*) any trust which was being administered by or under the Court; or (*c*) any trust where a judicial trustee had been appointed to be a trustee. The reason for deleting this sub-section was that it was considered preferable that this matter should be settled by Rules. He thought it was clear that where a trust was exclusively for religious or charitable purposes the public trustee ought not to have anything to do with it; but there might well be an estate one-twentieth part of the interest in which was by the will directed to be applied for religious or charitable purposes, and he did not think it would be right to prevent that estate coming under the management of the public trustee. This was a matter which ought to be settled by Rules, which their Lordships would have full opportunity of criticising.

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, line 18, to leave out Sub-section (4)."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5:—

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said that the clause as it stood provided that the public trustee might by that name be appointed to be trustee of any will or settlement or other instrument creating a trust. He wished to avoid any cavilling on the point, and therefore moved to insert, after "the public trustee may by that name," the words "or any other sufficient description."

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, line 26, after the word 'name' to insert the words 'or any other sufficient description.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR moved to amend Sub-section (4). It was, he said, provided that notice of any proposed appointment of the public trustee should, where practicable, be given to all persons beneficially interested. He proposed to insert the words "in the prescribed manner," so as to render the making of Rules compulsory.

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 7, after the word 'given' to insert the words 'in the prescribed manner.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR moved a proviso at the end of Sub-section 4, to the effect that a failure to give such notice should not invalidate any appointment made under this section. It was, he said, obvious that disastrous results might happen without some such proviso.

Amendment moved—

"In page 7, line 14, after the word 'made' to insert the words 'provided that a failure to give any such notice shall not invalidate any appointment made under this section.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*LORD ELLENBOROUGH moved that a sub-section be inserted to provide that the public trustee should be appointed as additional trustee on the application of any trustee or beneficiary in any trust in which a solicitor was acting or had acted in the double capacity of solicitor and trustee. He would himself have liked to see it made illegal for any person to hold the double position of solicitor and trustee to the same trust. He had, however, been told that the opposition to such a change in the law would be very strong, and that it would be outside the scope of this Bill to bring in a clause to that effect. Therefore, as a layman he appealed to the Lord Chancellor and to the other noble and learned Lords present to give co-trustees and beneficiaries such relief from their anxieties as this Bill might render possible. He asked for their sympathy all the more because they had never been in the position of the unfortunate layman, for even in their younger days no evil-disposed solicitor would have been likely to attempt to deceive a barrister in good practice. An ordinary layman, and by that he meant a man capable of earning his own living in his business or in his profession, might be fairly capable of holding his own against another trustee, or against a solicitor to the trust who could be changed. But whether he was a trustee or a beneficiary he was terribly handicapped when dealing with an irremoveable trustee, who as solicitor to the trust could get possession of documents and accounts.

Ladies were in a still worse position. Most of them knew less of business than the average layman. A lady once told him that she felt like a rabbit in the presence of a rattlesnake when transacting business with her co-trustee solicitor. The superior power conferred on one man by his double position of solicitor and trustee deterred many men from accepting trusteeships. If this one man was capable of misconduct, the trust fund was insufficiently protected, and both beneficiary and co-trustee might at any moment find themselves reduced to a state of bankruptcy. He did not at all wish it to be understood that he was attacking the great majority of solicitors. He was sincerely grateful to several of them, some of whom were still alive, for valuable advice given to him when in doubt and difficulty. But unfortunately there was a small minority among them who had shown themselves unable to withstand the temptations to which they had been exposed by the immense power given to them in their double capacity of solicitor and trustee. If this or some similar clause were accepted and made use of it would, he hoped, have the effect of protecting solicitors of this class against themselves and of giving additional security to trust funds.

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 14, after the word 'made to insert as a new sub-section '(5) If any trustee or beneficiary in any existing or future trust in which a solicitor is acting or has acted in the double capacity of solicitor and trustee, shall apply to the Court to have the public trustee appointed as additional trustee, the Court shall make the appointment.'"—(*Lord Ellenborough.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR accepted the sub-section with slight amendments, one of which required the consent of the public trustee to his appointment.

On Question, new sub-section, as amended agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 6, agreed to.

Clause 7:—

*LORD FABER moved to delete the latter half of Sub-section (1). The words he proposed to leave out were—

"Except where the liability is one to which neither the public trustee nor any of his officers has in any way contributed, and which neither he nor any of his officers could by the exercise of reasonable diligence have averted, and in that case the public trustee shall not, nor shall the Consolidated Fund, be subject to any liability."

As amended, the sub-section would read—

"The Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom shall be liable to make good all sums required to discharge any liability which the public trustee, if he were a private trustee, would be personally liable to discharge."

The first part of the clause as it stood rightly laid it down that a public trustee should only be liable to the same extent as a private trustee was now liable. Why, therefore, should words be inserted exempting the public trustee from certain liabilities which private trustees had not to incur? He confessed that the words were difficult to understand.

Amendment moved—

"In page 7, line 4, to leave out from the word 'discharge' to the end of the sub-section."—(*Lord Faber.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR thought it was the subject itself which was difficult to understand, and not the wording of the clause. What the clause meant was this. The Consolidated Fund was liable to make good all sums required to discharge any liability which the public trustee, if he were a private trustee, would be personally liable to discharge. This gave protection to all persons interested in trust funds. It was a very great advantage, especially in the case of small properties, if the persons interested could go to sleep feeling quite secure as to the safety of their property. But it was obvious, in the case of properties in regard to which there were other trustees and those trustees committed faults, the public trustee and the Consolidated Fund ought not to be made liable. Therefore the clause provided that the Consolidated Fund should answer for the default, except where the liability was one to which neither the public trustee nor any of his officers had in any way contributed, and which neither he nor any of his officers could by the exercise of reasonable diligence have averted. The clause was quite clear as it stood, and he could not consent to the Amendment.

*LORD FABER: A private trustee under those circumstances would not be liable.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Yes, he would, even in cases where he has not been guilty of any negligence at all. That is unfortunately the law.

*LORD FABER said he took it that a person who employed the public trustee would have to contribute to an insurance fund.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR replied that under the Bill nothing would be charged beyond what was necessary for making the thing self-supporting.

*LORD FABER said that if there was only a small fee charged almost everyone would employ the public trustee and a very large Department would be created. People would be induced to take this course because they would have the advantage of being guaranteed by the Consolidated Fund.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 7 agreed to.

Clauses 8, 9 and 10 agreed to.

Clause 11:—

THE LORD CHANCELLOR moved to omit from Clause 11, which deals with the mode of action of the public trustee, a proviso which declared that nothing in the Bill or in any rule made under it should confer on any person not otherwise entitled any right to appear before any Court on behalf of the public trustee or do any act which could otherwise only be lawfully done by a barrister or solicitor. He did not think it right that there should be special protection for barristers or solicitors or any other class or profession. The general law should apply, and he therefore proposed to omit the words in question.

Amendment moved—

"In page 8, line 39, to leave out from the word 'provided' to the word 'solicitor' on page 9, line 5."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 12 agreed to.

Clause 13:—

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said his Amendment to this clause was of a technical character, and he did not think their Lordships would have any difficulty in accepting it.

Amendment moved—

"In page 9, line 35, after the word 'estate' to insert as new sub-sections: (2) The Court may make the appointment of a person as judicial trustee to act as executor or administrator, with the will annexed, temporary, or subject to such conditions as to it may seem fit, and may sanction or direct the transfer of the estate to some other person for administration, and also the release of the person by whom such transfer is made. (3) Where application is made to the Court for the appointment of a judicial trustee, and it appears to the Court that the gross value of the trust property is less than five hundred pounds, the Court shall appoint a judicial trustee, unless sufficient cause is shown to the contrary. (4) This section shall be read as one with the Judicial Trustees Act, 1896."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 13, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 14:—

The LORD CHANCELLOR said that unless the words in his Amendment were inserted there would be an absolute right to have the accounts of all trusts investigated and audited. It was quite right that there should be this power, but it should be subject to Rules, for it would be absurd that money should be wasted where there was no necessity.

Amendment moved—

"In page 9, line 36, to leave out the word 'unless' and insert the words 'subject to rules under this Act and unless.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 14, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 15:—

LORD ASHBOURNE asked, with regard to Clause 15—which provides that the Lord Chancellor shall make rules under the Bill for, among other things, the establishment and regulation by the public trustee of any branch office—what was to be understood by the words "branch office." Was there to be a network of branches all over the country? If so, that would become a serious question for the Treasury.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said it was intended primarily to establish the public trustee in London. It was certainly not intended to set up branch offices all over the country; but there were officials connected with the High Court and the County Court in different parts of the country, and the idea was that the services of those already in the public service should be utilised.

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 15, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 16:—

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 16, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining clause agreed to, and Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 72.)

YEOMANRY CAMP CANTEENS.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE: My Lords, I rise to ask the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War a Question with reference to the prohibition of the sale of spirits at Yeomanry camp canteens. It appears that a year ago an order came down from the War Office, about a month before the Yeomanry training, to the effect that spirits were not to be sold in regimental canteens. This order was appealed against in such a manner that the War Office agreed not to proceed with the enforcement of it, and it was accordingly cancelled, these words being added "without prejudice to action on the part of the War Office at any future time." This year the following order was issued by the War Office to the Southern Command, dated March 26th—

"It has been decided that the Imperial Yeomanry, who are subject to the Militia Act, 1882, when out for training, should adhere to the provisions of Paragraph 12 of the Rules for the Management of Garrison and Regimental Institutes, which prohibit the sale of spirituous liquors of any kind in canteens."

This order has again been appealed against. I do not know to what extent the War Office has been memorialised with regard to it; but I do know that by the regiment to which I have the honour to belong—the Warwickshire Yeomanry—a protest was sent the other day. The Warwickshire Yeomanry protested against it on the ground that it would drive the men out of the camp into the towns. An extremely bureaucratic, but not very consoling, reply was sent to the effect that the order would be insisted upon.

I sincerely hope it is not the intention of the War Office to proceed with the enforcement of this order. Perhaps the noble Earl will forgive me if I say that the War Office are dealing with men recruited from a class who have more leisure, who are accustomed to have more liberty in their own homes and more money to spend than the class from which the Regular Army and the Militia are recruited. They are accustomed to taking spirits in their own homes when they think proper. They are men whose station in life gives them a right to expect that kind of latitude. If this order is insisted upon, and if they find that they cannot get spirits in their own canteens in camp, they will be driven into the towns, which is highly undesirable, or they will smuggle spirits into their tents, which will tend to secret drinking at all hours—a proceeding which is highly prejudicial to discipline. It is also possible that the Yeomanry camp may be very far distant from the town. I know of one regiment in the Eastern counties whose camp will be a long way from any fully-licensed house, and the men in that regiment will not be able to get any spirits at all. I am not going to say that the effect of being cut off for a fortnight from being able to drink whisky is in itself a hardship which we are not prepared to face, but I do desire most respectfully to protest against men in the Yeomanry being treated in this grandmotherly way. It is really treating them like children and submitting them to petty annoyances which they did not contemplate on joining the force. I sincerely trust that it is not too late for the order to be rescinded this year.

There is another very grave objection to proceeding with the order. It has come down at such a late hour that officers responsible for the messing of the Yeomanry have already made arrangements with contractors. If this order, therefore is insisted upon at the present moment, it means that the whole of these contracts will have to be reopened and recast, which will cause a great deal of trouble and annoyance. Not only that. The profit from the sale of spirits in the canteens is much higher than that obtained from the sale of beer, and if the power to sell spirits in camp is withdrawn it will have a very bad effect on the contract. But that is not the principal reason why I am bringing this matter forward. I hold that the tendency on the part of the War Office to be perpetually sending orders of this kind to the Yeomanry produces unnecessary irritation, and will have the effect of preventing men belonging to the class we particularly desire to attract to the Yeomanry from joining that force. I believe I am right in saying that as a whole the Imperial Yeomanry have shown remarkable steadiness while in camp, and that there has been complete absence of crime. I have had the honour to belong to the Yeomanry for a great many years, and I have hardly known among the men—I will not say anything about the officers, although their conduct has been most exemplary—any cases of excess whatever. The men have proved themselves in every way fit to be trusted in this matter, and I sincerely hope we shall have a favourable reply from the noble Earl the Under-Secretary.

*THE MARQUESS OF BATH: My Lords, before the noble Earl the Under-Secretary replies to the noble Lord who has just sat down, I should like to be permitted to say a few words in support of the appeal which he has made. I regret the short notice which has been given of this question, but I recognise that that was absolutely unavoidable. I believe I am the only commanding officer of Yeomanry present in your Lordships' House to-day. I cannot for the life of me make out the object of this order. It has clearly been put forward by someone who does not know the Yeomanry; and, if I may venture to say so, if orders like these are going to be issued where does the responsibility of the commanding officer come in? I should have thought that if there was one thing in regard to which you could trust the commanding officer it was the management of his camp in matters of this kind.

My noble friend, in the statement he has made, alluded to the conduct of the men and other matters, in reference to which I thoroughly concur. I have had myself very nearly twenty-five years experience of the Yeomanry. I saw them under the old conditions, when they went into the towns, and I have seen them of late in camps, and no one who has had that experience can fail to bear me out when I say that the difference in the regiments is most extraordinary. I can fully endorse what my noble friend has said as to their conduct. I have never known, since we have been in camp, of a single case of drunkenness in the regiment to which I belong, and I believe that is the case generally. I cannot believe this order has been issued with the idea of preventing drunkenness, because, if so, it really defeats its own object. As my noble friend has pointed out, if these men, who are accustomed to drinking spirituous liquors at home, cannot get them in the canteen they will go into the town, or there will, I am afraid, be a certain amount of secret drinking in the camps. Both alternatives are to be deplored.

I may further say that I have made inquiries from other commanding officers of Yeomanry, and they are all agreed in deprecating this order. We are, I believe, absolutely unanimous in this matter, and although we are, perhaps, weakly represented on this occasion in your Lordships' House, I do earnestly trust that the noble Earl, in the answer which he will give, will be able to assure us that this order will be reconsidered with a view to its withdrawal.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: My Lords, I should like to associate myself with the words which have fallen from Lord Willoughby de Broke and from the noble Marquess. After a good many years service in the Yeomanry I can thoroughly endorse every word which they have said. Speaking for the Yeomen themselves, I cannot conceive of any act on the part of the War Office which could have been more carefully designed than this order to diminish in their own eyes their self-respect. I am sure the noble Earl the Under-Secretary must appreciate the fact that the men who join the Yeomanry can be favourably compared, from a social point of view, with the men who join the Volunteers. Why should these men, who are self-respecting and whose private lives are quite exemplary, be treated like a lot of children during camp? Why should you insinuate that you think they are not sufficiently trustworthy to decide how much liquor they should take?

The Marquess of Bath.

There is one other point in connection with this to which I should like to draw the noble Earl's attention. When the contract for feeding the Yeomanry is entered into the contractor takes into account the profit he will get from the canteen, and consequently in proportion as the profits are high the men are fed cheaply. The prices charged in the canteens are not higher than those which obtain in public houses in the neighbourhood. If you take away from the contractor the right of making a profit on those liquors in the canteens, he will naturally charge the men higher prices for their food during the training, and the profits which might have been retained in the regiment will be distributed among the public houses in the district. For the sake of the internal economy of the regiment I would suggest to the noble Earl the Under-Secretary that it would be preferable to allow the old arrangement to continue than to insist on this new order.

For the last four or five years we have been told by the War Office that the Yeomanry was a force which they looked upon with respect and consideration, and which they regarded as a very valuable adjunct to the Regular force. I presume that those views are still held by the War Office to-day. I should very much like to hear from the noble Earl whether the authorities still entertain the same feelings of regard for the efficiency and the military bearing of those who belong to the Yeomanry force. If those views, which are held by Lord Roberts, General Buller, Lord Kitchener, and Sir Ian Hamilton, are still held in the War Office, then surely you ought to do all in your power to maintain the high character of this force. As to this order, I contend that it will do more to deplete the ranks of Yeomanry regiments than any other order which has been issued by the War Office for many years past.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH): My Lords, the Question raised by the noble Lord is doubtless an important one, but I can assure the House that the Army Council have been fully alive to its importance, and have most carefully considered the question in all its aspects. The Imperial Yeomanry when out for training are subject to the provisions of the Militia Act, and therefore subject, like the Regular Army and Militia, to military law. The Army Council have therefore decided that the Imperial Yeomanry must be subject, generally. to the same rules and regulations as the Regulars and Militia. In virtue of this decision the Imperial Yeomanry are subject to the Rules for Management of Garrison and Regimental Institutes, paragraph 12 of which lays down that—

> "At home stations the sale of spirituous liquors of any description is prohibited, but at stations abroad commanding officers will use their discretion in this respect."

At the same time the Army Council recognise that the Imperial Yeomanry, from the nature of their organisation and composition, may deserve special treatment in this matter, and, therefore, while insisting that they must be generally amenable to military discipline in this as in other respects, the Council have no objection to contractors who cater for the regiments of Imperial Yeomanry supplying with the mid-day meal such class of drink as the Yeomen desire, provided the sanction of the general officer commanding-in-chief is obtained. This is the only relaxation of the general principle the Army Council feel prepared to admit.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, the Answer of the noble Earl who has just spoken on behalf of His Majesty's Government seems to me to meet very indifferently the strong case which was made by the noble Lord on the Cross Benches in the course of his extremely temperate and well-reasoned speech. I understand that the War Office has issued this prohibition on the ground that while the Yeomanry are out for training they are subject to military law, and that for that reason they must be subject, not only to military law in the general sense, but to every detailed rule and regulation which may be issued by the military authorities in regard to the Regular Army. I must say that that seems to me to be rather a hide-bound manner of regarding the problem, because, as the noble Lord pointed out with so much truth, these Yeomen are drawn from a different social class from that which fills the ranks of other portions of the Army. As the noble Lord the Under-Secretary told us just now, they are differently organised. They have more leisure. They presumably have more loose cash in their pockets, and also, I think it is fair to point out, as has been pointed out by my noble friend Lord Bath, that they have an absolutely unblemished record for steadiness and good conduct when out for their annual training. Surely that was a reason for brushing on one side the argument that because a certain kind of regulation was good for ordinary regimental institutes, therfore it was also good for the Yeomanry when out for training in camp. I was glad to notice, towards the conclusion of the Under-Secretary's speech, that the Army Council have shown some signs of a desire to relent. I gathered from the noble Earl that at meals, at all events——

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Only at one meal, the mid-day meal.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: At one meal in the day these gallant soldiers are to be allowed a modicum of these beverages. I hope that on reflection the military authorities will see that this is a matter in which the officers commanding Yeomanry regiments can really be trusted. I should like, before sitting down, to ask the noble Earl a specific Question

—namely, whether before this regulation was issued, the War Office took into their confidence and consulted the colonels of Yeomanry regiments.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH: My Lords, I should like, as commanding officer of a regiment, to associate myself with what has fallen from the noble Lord on the Cross Benches. I regard this as a most irritating and unnecessary order, and with all respect to the great authority of the Army Council, I fail to understand the attitude which has been taken up. It seems to be presumed that everybody who wears His Majesty's uniform is cast in one mould, and that no possible relaxations are to be made in respect of any particular corps. The great object, I believe, nowadays is to induce men of education and standing to serve His Majesty, whether in the Auxiliary or Regular Forces, but if you are going to treat these men like children in this irritating way, you will be doing everything you possibly can to make their camps disagreeable, and to drive them out of the force. I do think that commanding officers should be treated with a little more confidence and given a little more discretion. The noble Earl, the Under-Secretary, stated that whilst spirituous liquors are not to be allowed at home, commanding officers abroad may supply them at discretion. Why are commanding officers abroad to be allowed to use their discretion whilst it is denied to commanding officers at home? Speaking for my own corps, the men in the ranks are practically of the same class as my officers. By a regulation of the regiment, all my officers go through the ranks. I have a great many men in the ranks who will eventually be officers, and all I can say is that if I had men who could not be trusted in the same camp with a bottle of whisky, they would not remain long in the corps.

VISCOUNT RIDLEY: My Lords, as one who has been mess president of a regiment, I suppose I ought to express my gratitude to the noble Earl the Under-Secretary for the concession which the Army Council have been pleased to make, but their action only shows their utter and complete ignorance in regard to this question. This concession only adds insult to injury. The noble Earl picked out a regulation which mentions home stations and regimental institutes, and he would have us believe that a Yeomanry training camp is to be compared with a home station or a regimental institute. It is a totally different thing. These troopers who go out for a fortnight, very often at great inconvenience to themselves, are men of standing. I have had doctors serving in my squadron as well as men who kept their own servants at home, and prosperous farmers. Are these men who come out for a fortnight in the year to have applied to them conditions which govern home stations or regimental institutes?

We are told that the Army Council, after careful consideration, have come to the conclusion to make a very gracious concession. The tired Yeoman is to be allowed to have a little whisky with his mid-day meal. What does this mean? The Yeoman drills hard all the morning, he comes back and has his midday meal, and it is a thousand to one he has to go to the stables after. The time at which he wants refreshment is long after the mid-day meal. What possible pretext or justification does the War Office allege for this treatment of the Yeomanry? I noticed the other day that the Secretory of State for War was asked in the other House whether any complaints had reached the War Office as regards the conduct of the Yeomanry during camp, and the Secretary of State answered that no such complaints had reached him. What possible reason is there for this alteration in the whole system of the Yeomanry?

All Parties in politics were disposed, when the Secretary of State said he wanted time to consider the question of Army reform, to give him that time. Are we to regard this abortive rule as the first product of the mind of the Secretary of State when working out his Army scheme? If that is the kind of rule and regulation which is going to begin the reform of the Army, then all I can say is

I certainly hope His Majesty's Government will not go any further. I still venture to hope, notwithstanding the extreme ignorance which this rule shows of all the conditions governing the Yeomanry, that the War Office have learned from commanding officers something about the circumstances of that force, and will reconsider their determination to persist in this order.

*THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The MARQUESS of RIPON): My Lords, the noble Viscount who has just sat down seems to think that it is a very extraordinary thing that the Army Council should desire to apply to the Yeomanry the same rules which apply to the Militia and the Regular Army. I confess I cannot see anything extraordinary in that at all. It seems to me that it is very desirable that the same rule should apply to all portions of His Majesty's Forces, and the notion which seems largely to occupy the minds of some of those who have addressed us this evening that there is any intention to make any kind of reflection upon the Yeomanry by applying to them the same rules which are applied to the Regular Army and to the Militia is an entirely erroneous one. I do not understand how it could have arisen.

The noble Lord who has just sat down and others have said that the Secretary of State in another place recognised the good conduct of the Yeomanry. No doubt he did. But nobody is complaining of the conduct of the Yeomanry. These proposals are not made because the Yeomanry have shown themselves unworthy of confidence. They are made upon general principles connected with the military forces at large, and it seems to me to be most unjust and unwise that noble Lords should attempt to make out that the Army Council are treating the Yeomanry with any want of consideration or respect, or in any way implying that their conduct is deserving of reprobation.

The case is absolutely simple and plain. The Army Council think it desirable that regulations of this kind should be applied in a uniform manner to all His Majesty's forces, and it is upon that ground that they have issued the order of which complaint is now made. The noble Duke the Duke of Marlborough, who I do not see now in his place, concluded his speech, if I understood him rightly, by the most extraordinary assertion that I have heard for a long time. The noble Duke indicated that this step had been taken by the Army Council and by His Majesty's Government for the purpose of reducing the strength of the Yeomanry. That really goes a little beyond what is fair argument. All I can say is that I believe the Army Council to be right in applying these rules generally, and I repudiate with all the strength I can any assertion that they are intended in any way to imply want of confidence in, or want of regard for, the Yeomanry force.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE: My Lords, if I may be permitted to speak again, I should like to tell the noble Lord that I do not think his reply to my Question at all satisfactory, from the point of view of the Yeomanry. If he will take some means of testing the opinion of the Yeomanry he will find that the action of the War Office is exceedingly distasteful to all ranks. We shall take an early opportunity of again raising the question, and shall consider, in the meantime, what we can do to get the Army Council to alter this decision.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Will the noble Earl answer the Question I put to him—namely, were Yeomanry colonels consulted before this regulation was introduced?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: The Question asked by Lord Willoughby de Broke only appeared on the Paper on Saturday, and I have not had much time to inquire into the matter. If the noble Marquess will put his Question down I shall be perfectly prepared to give him a full and omplete Answer.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 7th May, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [Lords]; Sheffield District Railway Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow

H. R. Baines and Company Bill [Lords]; Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

London County Council (Money) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Birr, Dungarvan, Londonderry, Trim, and Tuam (Rural)," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Bryce; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 193.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 3) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Dublin and Armagh," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; supported by Mr. Bryce; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 194.]

SHREWSBURY CORPORATION WATER BILL.

Ordered [April 10th], that the Shrewsbury Corporation Water Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell*)

HEACHAM WATER BILL.

Ordered [March 21st], that the Heacham Water Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to incorporate the Penllwyn Railway Company; and for other purposes." [Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [Lords.]

PENLLWYN RAILWAY AND ROAD BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Altofts (Nos. 1 and 2); Elsecar; Haigh; Manvers

Main; Newland Normanton; Wharncliffe Silkstone; and, Woodthorpe Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions from Sarum St. Edmund, against; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING.)

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Alcester, Alderminster; Alfrick; Allesley; Alnmouth; Areley Kings; Aston Cantlow; Aston Magna; Atherstone; Aylesford (two); Barston; Barton on the Heath; Bedworth; Beltingham with Henshaw; Benwell; Berkswell; Bidford; Bilton; Binley; Birling (two); Birmingham; Bishampton; Bishop's Tachbrook; Blackheath; Blyth and Horton; Bolton; Brabourne; Brandsby cum Stearsby; Bredbury (two); Brinklow; Burmington; Butters Marston; Bywell; Cambois; Chadkirk (two); Charing; Charlecote; Chelsea; Chequerbent; Churchill; Church Hulme; Church Lawford with King's Newnham; Claines; Cotheridge; Cramlington; Cubbington; Deptford; Dodderhill; Dunchurch; Eckington; Ellesmere Port; Evesham; Eckenham; Finstall; Fiddington; Foleshill; Folkestone; Frimley (two); Gabalfa (two); Great Comberton; Halesowen; Halford; Hammersmith; Harley Wood (two); Harrietsham; Hatton; Heddon on the Wall; Herne; Herne Bay; Hindlip; Hulton; Husthwaite; Idlicote; Kenilworth; Kidderminster; Kilvey (two); Kineton; Kington and Dormston; Kirk Whelpington; Knightwick and Doddenham; Little Chart; Little Lever (two); Llandaff (two); Long Itchington; Lucker, Bradford, and Adderstone; Lulsley; Malvern (three); Malvern Link; Marton Mawgan (two); Meriden; Midsomer Norton (two); Meluron; Moor Monkton (two); Myddle; Newbold on Stour; Newbold Pacey and Asherne; Newburn; Netherton; Newcastle-on-tyne (fifteen); Ninebanks; Normanton (two); North Gosforth; North Shields (two); Oldberrow cum Norton Bagot and Spernall; Old Milverton and Guys Cliffe; Overbury; Pedmore; Preston Bagot; Rainbow Hill; Rashcliffe; Ratley; Redditch; Romsley; Rowington; Rusholme; St. Ives (two); St. Paul in the Blockhouse; Salwarpe; Shelsley Beauchamp; Shelsley Walsh; Shilton and Anstey; Sibertswold (two); Sissinghurst; Slaley; Snodland (two); Staunton; Stepney; Stoke Prior; Stourbridge; Suckley; Tardebigge; Teston (two); Tynemouth; Upper Arley; Upton Snodsbury; Wallsend (four); Walton Dale; Wappenbury with Eathorpe; Warmington; Warwick; Wealdstone; Welland; Wing (two); Witney; Wolford; Wollaston; Wolston; Wolvey; Woolston, Brandon, and Bretford; and, Worcester; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION OF DEFECTIVE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Old Monkland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from the Royal Burghs of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petition from Sandwich, for repeal; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Annual Report of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).

Copy presented, of Final Report of the Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Science (including the Royal School of Mines), Vol. II., Minutes of Evidence, Appendices II. to XIII., and Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MILITARY PRISONS.

Copy presented, of Report on the Discipline and Management of Military Prisons in 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATAL.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the Native Disturbances in Natal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3573 to 3578 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (ORDINANCE).

Copy presented, of University Court Ordinance No. XIV. (Edinburgh, No. 4) (Institution of Degrees in Veterinary Medicine and Surgery and relative Regulations) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 158.]

INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relative to the establishment of an International Agricultural Institute, with the Report of the British Delegates, and the Minutes of Proceedings at the International Conference on Agriculture at Rome [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).

Copy presented, of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to inquire into and Report whether Preferential Treatment is given by the Railway Companies in Great Britain to Foreign and Colonial as compared with Home, farm, dairy, and market garden produce, with Minutes of Evidence, Appendices, and Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACTS, 1858 AND 1876.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated May 1st, 1906, declaring British Central Africa, the East Africa Protectorate, Northern Nigeria, the Somaliland Protectorate, Southern Nigeria, and Uganda to be unhealthy places within the meaning of The Superannuation Act, 1876 [by Act], to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated May 1st, 1906, granting to Mr. William Pearson, Staff Clerk, War Office, a Retired Allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING STATISTICS, 1905.

Copy presented, of Statistics as to the operation and administration of the Laws relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

Copy presented, of Sixty-seventh Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF DURHAM).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of Durham, altering certain Polling Districts in the Chester-le-Street Parliamentary division of the county [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House:—

LUNACY.

Copy of Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of Patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the Visitors of Lunatics between October, 1st, 1905, and March 31st, 1906 [by Act].

EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT).

Address for "Return of the Indian Financial Statement for 1906–7, and of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General thereon."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*)

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903 (INVESTMENT OF FUNDS).

Copy ordered, "of Statement issued by a special Committee of the Dublin Stock Exchange with reference to the Investment of Funds under the control of the Supreme Court."—(*Sir William Bull.*)

ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).

Return ordered, "of Abstract Account of the receipts and payments of the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer in Scotland, in the year ended

December 31st, 1905, in the Administration of Estates and Treasure Trove on behalf of the Crown."

"And, of Alphabetical List of Estates which fell to the Crown as Ultimus Hæres in Scotland, administered by the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, in the same year."—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Armament of the "County Class" Cruisers.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the superior armament of contemporary cruisers of other Powers, and of the failure of six-inch gun fire to effect any material damage in the battle of the Sea of Japan, it is intended to strengthen the armament of the ten cruisers of the county class.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) In view of the cost involved it is not proposed to make any change at the present time.

Farriers and the Workmen's Compensation Act.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it has been brought to his notice that the limit requiring five persons to be employed in order to obtain the benefits of the Workmen's Compensation Bill will have the effect of excluding large numbers of persons following the occupation of farriers; and whether he proposes to modify the Bill for the purpose of meeting this particular case.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Yes, Sir; I have received communications to this effect. It appears to me that farriers would, save in very exceptional cases, be included in the Bill as drawn; but the point is now under my consideration.

Speeches of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Secretary of State for the Colonies has officially cabled to South Africa a report or summary of a speech delivered in the House of Commons by the Under-Secretary of State; if so, to what Colonies or persons the message has been sent, and with what instructions as to publication or otherwise; whether he will lay upon the Table such report or summary, with a copy of any despatch accompanying the same; and also whether there is any, and, if so, what precedent for any official communication at the public expense of any similar report or summary.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) Full summaries of the speeches delivered by the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in the House of Commons on April 2nd and 5th were cabled to the Governor of Natal and the High Commissioner, respectively, with instructions to make them public through the South African newspapers or other channels. I do not think it necessary to lay the summaries upon the Table of the House; but I shall be glad to forward the right hon. Gentleman copies if he desires them. The most exact precedent for making such communication of speeches at the public expense occurred on June 27th, 1899, when a summary with long extracts of a speech delivered at Birmingham by the then Secretary of State for the Colonies was telegraphed to the Governor of the Cape on the ground that a verbatim report was not likely to reach Lord Milner, and a direction was added that publication of the summary was left to his discretion. The summary was communicated by Lord Milner to the leading Capetown papers.

The Pending Imperial Colonial Conference.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table the Correspondence that has taken place with the Colonial Governments with regard to the meeting of the next Imperial Conference in 1907, including the replies of the Colonial Government to the invitation addressed to them by His Majesty's Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Chucrhill.*) I shall be glad to lay the correspondence upon the Table at the request of the right hon. Gentleman.

Enteric Fever at Darenth Asylum, Kent.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the successive outbreaks of enteric fever during the past two years at the Metropolitan Imbecile Asylum at Darenth, Kent, traceable to broken drains and to the fact that the drains of this asylum are used to irrigate portions of the enclosure, and that the contents finally disappear into the chalk upon which the asylum stands; and, seeing that this enclosure is within five furlongs from the Darenth pumping-station of the Metropolitan Water Board, and at a higher level, will he state what steps he proposes to take.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am aware that there have been occurrences of enteric fever at the asylum during the past two years, and that the first of them was supposed to be due to a defect in the drainage. It is the case that the drainage of the asylum is disposed of by irrigation on the asylum farm, but I understand that the land is at a considerable distance from the Darenth well, and that the local conditions are such that there would appear to be no risk of the well becoming polluted from anything that may happen at the asylum. I will, however, communicate further with the Metropolitan Water Board on the subject.

Illiterate Voters.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he proposes to publish the number of illiterate persons who voted at the last General Election.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I beg to reply to this Question on behalf of my right hon. friend. If the hon. Member will move for a Return similar to that given in 1896 there will be no objection to granting it.

Vaccination Exemption Certificate at Oxford.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): To ask the President of the Local Government Board as to whether his attention has been called to the difficulty of obtaining certificates of exemption from vaccination in the Oxford City Court; and, if so, whether he intends to issue an instruction in regard to the same.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I beg to reply to this Question on behalf of my right hon. friend. My attention has not been called to any such cases at Oxford, and I have no authority to give instructions to the justices. A circular is, however, about to be issued setting out what, I am advised, is the intention of the law respecting the grant of certificates of exemption.

Education—Distinction between Pauper and Non-pauper Children.

MR. SUMMERBELL: To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he contemplates taking any steps for abolishing the distinction which is now made between pauper and non-pauper children in the matter of the payment of fees or other expenses at public elementary schools or at certified special schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am not aware that the distinctions referred to, which are in effect nothing more than an adjustment of payments between Poor Law authorities and education authorities, effect in any way the children concerned. And I therefore, as at present advised, see no reason for interfering with existing practice in this regard.

Education Bill and Residentiary Training Colleges.

MR. MOND (Chester): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state if Part II. of the new Education Bill (Educational Endowments) includes amongst such educational endowments the residentiary training colleges of England.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The definitions applicable to Part II. of the Education Bill would certainly include any training college, which in its legal aspect is an educational endowment.

Educational Expenditure.

SIR GEORGE DOUGHTY (Great Grimsby): To ask the President of the Board of Education what was the total cost of education in England and Wales in 1901–2 under the school board; what proportion was borne by the Imperial Exchequer and what proportion by the ratepayers; what was the total cost in

1903–4, 1904–5, and 1905–6; what proportion came from the Imperial Exchequer and what proportion from the ratepayers; what was the total on capital account for school buildings and loans; and what was paid for interest and sinking fund, or redemption of loans, in each of those years.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) It is extremely difficult at present to arrive at figures which are even approximately accurate, in regard to the later years, named in the hon. Member's Question, but I am having calculations made, and if he will put down his Question again for Wednesday next I shall hope by then to have approximate estimates, which may serve his purpose, based upon various figures supplied by local authorities.

Petitions to Privy Council and the Endowed Schools Act.

MR. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask the President of the Board of Education how many petitions have been presented to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council against schemes under the Endowed Schools Acts framed by the Endowed Schools Commissioners, or the Charity Commissioners, or the Board of Education, as their successors; and in how many cases such petitions succeeded in obtaining an alteration of such schemes.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The number of petitions is thirty, of which one was not in order and two were withdrawn. In the remaining twenty-seven cases twenty-one schemes were allowed to proceed and six were remitted. The last petition presented and not withdrawn was dealt with in April, 1894. The last case in which the scheme was remitted was in February, 1890. No scheme framed by the Board of Education in the exercise of their powers under the Endowed Schools Acts, has been the subject of an appeal to the Judicial Committee.

Production of Coal in the United Kingdom.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the total quantity of coal produced in the United Kingdom in the year 1905, and what percentage the amount exported bore to the total produced.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The total quantity of coal produced in the United Kingdom in 1905 was 236,128,936 tons. The total quantity exported, including the estimated coal equivalent of the exports of coke and patent fuel was 49,764,500 tons, or, if coal used for bunkering steamers engaged in the Foreign trade be included, 67,160,646 tons. The proportion of exports to production accordingly amounted to 21·1 per cent., or 28·4 per cent., according as bunker coal is excluded or included.

Gloucestershire Sewer Commissioners.

MR. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that on April 19th, 1858, Her late Majesty issued a Commission of Sewers for the lower level of the county of Gloucester, and thereby appointed 150 Commissioners; that these Commissioners are appointed by the Crown Office of the House of Lords, under a writ of dedimus potestatem, pursuant to 23 Henry VIII., cap. 5; that these Commissioners have power to levy rates in regard to the River Severn, etc., without the permission or control of the ratepayers effected, although such ratepayers are required to pay such rates which such Commissioners may levy; that such Commissioners do not and are not required by law to publish any balance-sheet of moneys received and expended; and whether he will take steps to get rid of this unrepresentative authority, and to place the control of these matters under the county, district or parish council concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The Commission of Sewers for the lower level of the county of Gloucester was issued and the Commissioners are appointed as stated in the Question. They have power to levy rates on the lands benefited by their works, without the consent of the persons effected, but a right of appeal to quarter sessions against the rate is given by Section 47 of The Land Drainage Act, 1861, and in certain cases it is provided, by Sections 29–31 of the same Act, that the proprietors of one-half of the area of the land within which it is proposed to levy a rate can veto the expenditure which the rate is intended to meet. Returns of their receipts and expenditure are made under the Local Taxations Returns Act, and abstracts of them are annually presented to Parliament, but their accounts are not otherwise published. The powers of such commissions can be transferred to county councils by Provisional Orders made under Section 10 of The Local Government Act, 1888, or an elective drainage board can be created, under Part II. of The Land Drainage Act, 1861, to take over the drainage of the whole or any part of their district; but the consent of the Commissioners themselves appears to be required before either course can be adopted. I am consulting the Board of Agriculture and the Local Government Board as to whether it is desirable to make any alteration in the powers and duties of these bodies.

Direct and Indirect Taxation.

MR. HICKS BEACH: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportions will be contributed to the estimated revenue of 1906–7 by direct and indirect taxation respectively, as compared with the actual proportions contributed in the years 1904–5 and 1905–6.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith*): The proportions of tax revenue (excluding coal export duty, but including local taxation revenue) derived from direct and indirect taxes respectively, are as follows:—

Year.	Direct.	Indirect.
1904–5 - - -	49·5	50·5
1905–6 (approximate)	50·4	49·6
1906–7 (estimated) -	51·0	49·0

Receipts from the Coal Duty.

MR. HICKS BEACH: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what were the net receipts from the Coal Duty in the year 1905–6.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*): The net receipts from the duty on the export of coal, coke, and patent fuel in the financial year 1905–6 were £2,183,973.

Railway and Harbour Construction at Vizagapatam.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the recent sanction accorded for the construction of the Raipur-Vizagapatam Railway is to be accompanied by the construction of a harbour at the port of Vizagapatam.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*): The scheme recently sanctioned for the construction of a railway from Raipur to Vizianagram on the East Coast Railway is independent of the question of constructing a harbour at the port of Vizagapatam.

Indian Army Organisation—Opinions of Lords Cromer, Elgin, Sir David Barbour and Sir Henry Brackenbury.

MR. REES: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the opinions of Lord Cromer, Lord Elgin, Sir David Barbour, and Sir Henry Brackenbury were laid before the Committee on Indian Army Organisation appointed by his predecessor in office.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*): No record was kept of the proceedings of the Committee to which this Question refers; but I understand that Sir David Barbour attended one of its meetings, and that other gentlemen, including Lord Cromer, Lord Elgin, and Sir Henry Brackenbury wrote letters or sent memoranda to the Secretary of State, which, with the exception of one or two which arrived too late, were communicated by him to the members of the Committee.

Reorganisation of Indian Police.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India when the reorganisation scheme recommended by the Police Commission, so far as relates to the European administrative officers, will be put into force.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I hope that it may be possible to bring the new scheme into force with effect from April 1st, 1906.

Revenue Derived from Import Duty in India.

MR. PIKE PEASE: To ask the Secretary of State for India what is the amount of revenue derived from the general tariff on imports between 1900-5; and will he say whether these duties were imposed for protective purposes.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) In the five years ending March 31st, 1905, the total amount of revenue yielded by the general tariff on imports was £10,050,425. The Answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative,

Compensation to Evicted Tenants on the Lamphiere Estate.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the amount of monetary compensation alleged to be paid to James Feehan and Patrick Cormack who claim to be evicted tenants on the Lamphiere Estate; is he aware that the solicitors for the vendors admitted that both these men were evicted tenants whose claims would be considered on the termination of the grazing tenancy; is he aware that the evicted tenants deny entirely that they at any time made objection to the proposal of the vendor that they be placed back in their respective farms provided that advances yielding annuities of £5 and £15 were made by the Estates Commissioners; have they called for a public investigation into the whole circumstances of this affair, and is it proposed to accede to this request; what is proposed to be done with the £700 retained out of the purchase money; was James Cormack, the person to whom the sale of the plots claimed by the evicted tenants was made, a tenant within the meaning of the Land Act of 1903 at the time of sale, or a grazier holding under the eleven months system; is he aware that the peace of the locality has been disturbed owing to the sale to this man; and will he say if the landlady, Temperance Ann Lamphiere, and James Cormack and his brother-in-law, Martin Cormack, are receiving police protection because of their action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The subject of this Question has already been dealt with in my reply to the hon. Member's Question of April 10th,† to which I beg to refer. The Estates Commissioners inform me that, according to their information, Denis Feehan, as whose representative James Feehan now claims, voluntarily surrendered his farm of ten acres in 1876, having been compensated to his satisfaction, but the amount of compensation given is not known to the Commissioners. James Feehan was then put into possession of 3 acres of the farm, but surrendered the same in 1879 owing two years' rent and receiving £12 compensation. Mrs. Elizabeth Cormack, as whose representative Patrick Cormack claims, received £10 compensation in cash, and was forgiven arrears of rent amounting to £50. As already stated, the sale to James Cormack has been completed, and the holding legally vested in him, and the Estates Commissioners do not intend to re-open the case. The disposal of the £700, portion of the purchase money which has been withheld, is a matter for the decision, under statute, of the Judicial Commissioner. James Cormack purchased as a tenant within the meaning of the Act of 1903. I am informed that it is the fact that the peace of the locality has been disturbed by persons who are in sympathy with the applicants, and proceedings at the suit of the police have been instituted with the object of having three of the offenders bound to keep the peace. James and Martin Cormack are receiving police protection.

The Crete Campaign.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether the conduct of the British forces under trying circumstances during the troubles in Crete in 1898 has been brought under his notice; and whether he will consider whether a medal cannot be given or some recognition made of the services rendered by the men of the Highland Light Infantry and other regiments at that time.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am aware of the excellent conduct of the British forces in Crete during the troubles in 1898. The question of the grant of a medal was raised in 1899, but it was decided after full consideration that it could not be granted. I am afraid that I cannot undertake to reopen the question.

Cost of a Soldier.

MR. PIKE PEASE: To ask the Secretary of State for War, what is the estimated cost of a soldier in England

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 1145.

and India, respectively, belonging to the Calvary, Engineers, Artillery, and Infantry.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The average annual cost of a trained private soldier, is as follows:—

—	At Home.	In India.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Cavalry - - - - -	62 11 4	82 5 5
Engineers - - - - -	77 2 7	—
Artillery :		
Horse - - - - -	64 7 4	86 14 0
Field - - - - -	61 18 3	84 2 6
Garrison - - - -	59 13 2	80 17 9
Infantry of the Line - - -	57 8 9	75 5 2

The figures of the soldiers at Home include charges for barracks, arms, and ammunition, &c. The figures for India include as well, charges for the capitation rate, for passage, &c.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Explosives Committee.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that Lord Rayleigh, one of the three members of the Explosives Committee, resigned his position as president at the commencement of the present financial year, will he state whether the vacancy has yet been filled, and, if so, by whom.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddingtonshire): The Explosives Committee has been reconstituted as the Board of Ordnance Research. The Board will consist of Major-General O'Callaghan as president, with Rear-Admiral Foote, Sir W. Crookes, Sir A. Noble, Mr. Ewing, and two members of the Ordnance Committee as members.

Soldiers' Kits.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the possibility of providing sleeping suits as parts of the soldier's kit, or make such other arrangements as will relieve soldiers of the necessity of sleeping in their underclothing, as is the practice at present.

MR. HALDANE: The soldier is at present granted three shirts on enlistment and receives an allowance for maintenance of kit; he accordingly has a shirt to sleep in other than the one he has worn during the day. I am afraid that, owing to the large expense involved, I cannot hold out any hopes of making the provision suggested by the hon. Member.

Vaccination of Soldiers.

*MR. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether soldiers having a conscientious objection to vaccination may be permitted to make such objection, and thereby claim exemption equal with the civilian.

MR. HALDANE: All soldiers on attestation sign a declaration to the effect that they are willing to be vaccinated or revaccinated. Under these circumstances, and in view of the special conditions of military life, no exemption can be permitted.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the death rate among re-vaccinated soldiers is higher than that among the unvaccinated population.

MR. HALDANE: I am not aware of that.

MR. LUPTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire?

MR. HALDANE: If the hon. Member will put a Question down I will see if a Return can be granted.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): Is it legal to allow a soldier to contract out?

MR. HALDANE: He does not.

Fort George, Inverness-shire.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the officers' quarters at Fort George, Inverness-shire, are not watertight, and that the casemates in which the Ross-shire Militia and other men are quartered are damp and otherwise unsatisfactory; and will he call for a Report on the subject.

MR. HALDANE: The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Scottish Command reports that he personally inspected Fort George a week ago and that no complaints were made in regard to the officers' quarters. As regards the casemates he considers them, *qua* casemates, extremely good and certainly not damp.

MR. WEIR asked the right hon. Gentleman to inquire further.

MR. HALDANE: I have called for a Report. If the hon. Member desires further information I will try and get it.

South African Mines—Threatened Closing.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any official information showing that, as a result of State-aided repatriation of Chinese coolies, the West Rand and West Rand Consolidated Mines are to be closed; and whether, in drafting the new Constitutions for the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, he will consider the desirability of empowering the Governments of the Colonies to become possessed of these and other mines.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): (1) I have no official information. The Transvaal Legislature will be quite competent to deal with any question of the State ownership and administration of gold mines which may arise after the grant of responsible Government. (2) I should add that it is not usually the practice of persons possessing gold mines to cease to work them while there is any profit to be made out of them. It is not proposed to introduce any special provision in the Constitution with this object.

Orange River Colony.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies has the Government received any information from the Orange River Colony which would indicate that a majority of the population would prefer a form of government which would not involve the operation of the full party system.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State will be in a better position to judge as to the views of the majority of the population upon this matter after the South African Committee have visited the Colony and have reported. I see no public advantage to be gained by premature and fragmentary announcements of the constitutional methods to be adopted in either Colony.

South African Civil Service.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies will the Government consider the wisdom and fairness of either securing in their position the present efficient members of the Orange River Colony and Transvaal Civil Service, or of giving compensation to those who, through the development of constitutional government, are relieved of their positions after arduous labours in the service.

*MR. CHURCHILL: His Majesty's Government will carefully consider the claims of Civil servants, but I am not at present prepared to say to what extent or by what method safeguards can be provided.

South African Land Settlement Advance.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies will the Government consider the advisability of keeping the £3,000,000 set apart for land settlement after the war, or such portion of it as may be available through yearly instalments, for reinvestment in perpetuity in land for British settlement; and will he consider favourably the establishment of a permanent Commission or Board to administer under such an arrangement.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The matter will not escape the consideration of the Secretary of State.

British Settlers in Orange River Colony.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government has received any communication from representatives of the Orangia Union and the Dutch residents of the Orange River Colony concerning the future of British settlers in the Colony; and what was the nature of that communication.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State does not appear to have had such a communication addressed to him.

Johannesburg and Pretoria Protests.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the attention of the Secretary of State for the Colonies has been drawn to the terms of a resolution passed on the 2nd instant, at a meeting of the commercial community at Johannesburg, protesting against the repatriation of Chinese, on the ground that it would throw out of employment a large number of skilled whites, dislocate business, and lead to the ruin of large numbers of traders; and whether, in view of this expression of opinion by the people of the Transvaal, the Government intend to proceed with repatriation before the creation of responsible government.

*MR. CHURCHILL: Lord Selborne informs me that he is forwarding by mail protests of the Johannesburg Chamber of Trade. In the meantime the protest of the Pretoria Chamber of Commerce has been received by telegraph, and is in the following terms:—"That this chamber views with serious apprehension the announcement that His Majesty's Government are about to offer financial assistance to indentured Chinese labourers who desire to return to China, and this chamber therefore earnestly appeals to His Majesty's Government to reconsider its decision and to defer any action in connection with the Labour Importation Ordinance pending grant of responsible government to the Transvaal." His Majesty's Government propose to adhere to the policy already declared to Parliament.

Repatriation Proclamation.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table a copy of the Chinese translation of the repatriation notice now being issued to the coolies working in the Transvaal mines. Will the hon. Gentleman also lay on the Table a copy of the Chinese translation, so that we may have an opportunity of examining it and seeing if there are any terminological inexactitudes?

*MR. CHURCHILL: If the hon. Member wishes to impart an element of humour to our proceedings, he should select a somewhat more original point. The Secretary of State will ask that a copy of the notice in the Chinese language should be sent by mail from South Africa, in order that the hon. Member may have an opportunity of comparing it with the English version, and of forming an opinion for himself upon the style and accuracy of the translation.

Papers on Repatriation.

*MR. LEHMANN (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, and if so, when, the correspondence between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Government of the Transvaal, with reference to the repatriation of the Chinese coolies on the Rand and the issue of the proclamation, will be laid before the House.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I am not yet in a position to name a date. The Secretary of State will consider how soon publication may conveniently take place.

Government "Act of Benevolence."

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, with reference to the notification addressed to Chinese indentured labourers on the Witwatersrand gold mines, if he will state upon what grounds the means provided by the Government for repatriation are described in the notification as an exceptional act of benevolence which ought to command gratitude.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The object of this and similar language in the proclamation is to assure the Chinese coolies that the Imperial Government, while willing to provide relief in exceptional cases, has no desire to incite them to leave their work, and will bear no malice against those who do not avail themselves of the facilities offered. In view of the fact that it is the British taxpayer who will bear any charges which may be involved, the word "benevolence" does not seem to me to be ill chosen; nor would gratitude be wholly ill-placed on the part of Chinese thus enabled by the intervention of a distant community to return unexpectedly to their native land.

The Flogging of Coolies.

MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Secretary of State is aware that in the recent proceedings for a habeas corpus taken by Li Kui Yu, in the Supreme Court of the Transvaal, on March 30th, against Mr. Jameson, the superintendent of foreign labour, Mr. Jameson deposed on oath that he had reported to Lord Selborne that Robert Herman Witthauer, the compound manager in the Consolidated Langlaagte Mine, had admitted to him, in the presence of witnesses, that he had himself flogged coolies, and that Li Kui Yu was not to blame; and whether he can say why, in the face of this admission of guilt by Witthauer in the presence of witnesses, the law officers of the Crown in the Transvaal have so far failed to institute criminal proceedings against him.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has seen Mr. Jameson's statement. The Secretary of State is informed that the law officers of the Transvaal Government doubt whether the evidence as yet obtained is sufficient for ensuring a successful prosecution, but he has telegraphed urging Lord Selborne to cause every effort to be made to prosecute.

Repatriation of Chinese Coolies.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, under the proclamation that has been issued in respect to Chinese labour, the final decision in individual cases rests with the Superintendent of Foreign Labour; and is it still possible for the Chinese who so desire to be repatriated free of expense to themselves.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The responsibility for deciding upon individual cases is placed upon the Superintendent of Foreign Labour, subject to any instructions he may receive from the Lieutenant-Governor. The policy of His Majesty's Government is, and has always been, that no Chinaman who wishes to purchase his discharge under Clause 14 of the Labour Importation Ordinance should be prevented merely through want of funds. Under the notice which has been read to the House the Chinese labourers will be expected to make a contribution in addition to their savings towards the expense as a proof of the genuineness of their desire to return. But my hon. friend may rest assured that these provisions will not be allowed to defeat the main intentions of His Majesty's Government.

MR. DALZIEL: Then may I take it that the reply is in the affirmative to the Question that the policy of the Government is that a Chinaman who wishes to to return, even without any contribution whatever, can return?

*MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir. I did not desire to imply that a contribution of any kind would be necessary in all cases, provided that the *bona fide* desire of the Chinaman to return was very plainly made manifest.

*MR. LEHMANN: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what laws of the Transvaal are referred to in the recent proclamation to the Chinese coolies in the mines as punishing any attempt to deceive the Superintendent of Foreign Labour by misrepresentation; and whether His Majesty's Government will consider the advisability of issuing to the Chinese coolies on the Rand a further proclamation, to be signed by the High Commissioner himself, in order to explain that the repatriation proclamation is in no sense intended to intimidate them or to deter them from applying for repatriation.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I presume the reference is to the ordinary law. The Secretary of State proposes to await the results of the present proclamation which he believes will give full effect to the intentions of His Majesty's Government.

*MR. LEHMANN: Are we to take it that these representations are to be made on oath?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I do not think so, but that is merely my personal opinion.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any official information showing that the West Rand Mines and the West Rand Consolidated Mines have been ordered to be closed in consequence of the determination of the Government to proceed with the repatriation of Chinese coolies; and whether he can state the number of skilled whites who will be thrown out of employment from this cause.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I have no official information on this point; but the closing down of mines, as my hon. friend will perceive, cannot well be a consequence of a policy of repatriation which has not yet become operative.

MR. LONSDALE: Then when will it become operative?

*MR. CHURCHILL: The notice is to be posted to-morrow morning, and it will therefore be operative in a few days.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.) asked whether the Crown had power, as Mr. Kruger certainly had, to prevent the shutting down of the mines by force, and to keep them open if such a threat was made.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I should hesitate to reply to a Question involving such grave and complex legal points as to whether the Crown has or has not power, in a great public emergency such as occurred in the South African Republic on the outbreak of war, to make considerable inroads on the ordinary rights of private property. But I should have thought it was undesirable that the Government should undertake the management of derelict gold mines which would not be placed at their disposal unless it had been found that every other method of making them profitable had failed.

Illiterate Chinese and the Proclamation.

MR. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that many of the Chinese working in the Transvaal mines are illiterate persons, and what steps will be taken in their cases to enable them to understand the repatriation proclamation and to prepare the petition for repatriation required by the proclamation; through what channels in each mine these petitions from the Chinese coolies are to reach the Superintendent of Foreign Labour; and what security has been taken to see that the coolies are not intimidated into not sending petitions.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The conduct of the whole matter will be entrusted to Mr. Jamieson and his officers, who, the Secretary of State is convinced, may be trusted to see that the coolies receive fair opportunities of understanding and accepting the offers of the proclamation. I may add that the work of Mr. Jamieson will be carried on under the supervision of Lord Selborne, and we have every confidence that full and *bona fide* effect will be given to the policy the Government have laid down.

Mail Communication with the West Indies.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the lack of facilities for mail communication between Great Britain and the northern islands of the West Indies; and whether, seeing that at present mail opportunities only occur for these islands once a month, he will lay papers relating to the negotiations which resulted in the abandonment of the previous mail contract.

*MR. CHURCHILL: It is not strictly correct to say that mail opportunities for the northern islands of the West Indies occur only once a month at present, but His Majesty's Government have the question of the West Indian mail arrangements now under their consideration. The circumstances which led to the decision not to continue a West Indian mail contract are fully explained in the despatch to the Governors of the West Indian Colonies which was laid before Parliament in May last.

Colonial Conference.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state the date that has been fixed for the assembly of the Colonial Conference next year; and whether the subject of preferential fiscal relations between all parts of the Empire will be one of the questions for consideration at the Conference.

*MR. CHURCHILL: It is proposed that the next Colonial Conference will meet on April 15th, 1907. It will be open to the Conference to discuss any matter of Imperial interest.

South African War Contribution.

*MR. T. F. RICHARDS: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give the names of the person or persons who were responsible for the arrangement that the South African mine owners would contribute £30,000,000 towards the cost of the South African war; and, further, if he has any information bearing upon this subject to lay before the House.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I must refer the hon. Member to my Answers of March 13th and March 21st to similar Questions.† For his convenience I have given instructions that copies of these replies should be sent to him from the Colonial Office.

Education in Ceylon.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state from what date it is intended to institute the furnishing of quarterly Returns by superintendents regarding the attendance at school of estate children in Ceylon; whether instructions have yet been issued for the inspection of estate schools by Government officers, as recommended by the Elementary Education Commission; and whether the legislative provisions referred to in the 55th paragraph of the Commissioners' Report will be included in the proposed measure dealing with country districts, and when such measure is likely to be introduced.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I would refer the hon. Member to the Secretary of State's despatch of March 1st which has been published in Cd. 2873. I do not think that I can add anything to the position as there stated, except that the introduction of educational changes in a Colony like Ceylon must necessarily take some time.

Irrigation Expenditure in India.

*MR. T. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the fact that only a little more than eighty-one lacs were spent on irrigation during 1905–6, though the Budget allotment for that purpose was 125 lacs; and whether, considering the importance of irrigation in India, he will take measures to secure the full Budget allotment being spent this year.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN ELLIS, Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): My attention has been drawn to the lapse in the grant to which the hon. Member refers. I do not think it implies any relaxation in the efforts which the Government of India are making to carry out their programme of irrigation works. But in the construction of large and costly works, changes in the design or general arrangements involving postponement of expenditure, are occasionally found necessary, and it is then difficult to avoid failure to spend the whole grant allotted. I will call the attention of the Government of India to the subject.

Cemeteries in India—Consecration Fees.

SIR J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for

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† See (4) *Debates* cliii., 1093–4; cliv., 367.

India whether, on the consecration of buildings or cemeteries on behalf of the Church of England or the Church of Rome, any fee to bishop or registrar or other expenditure is paid out of the revenue of India.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: I cannot answer certainly, but will make inquiry.

English Churches in India.

SIR J. JARDINE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, on account of religious objections made to the Government of India about members of the Church of England, and members of the Church of Scotland using the same building as a place of worship, the Government of India has been put to the expense of erecting any new churches; if so, what is the capital expense; and whether any increase of annual charge on the revenues of India has been so caused.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: For the reasons explained in the Papers presented to Parliament in 1900 as Command Paper, No. 129, new churches for the use of Presbyterian troops have been sanctioned at eight stations in India, to be built at Government expense. I am not aware of the exact amount spent upon them. The annual charge for the repair and maintenance of these churches, which are Government buildings, will fall on public funds, but I am unable to state what its amount will be.

Army Distribution in India.

MR. T. HART-DAVIES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he can present a Return giving a list of the cantonments, barracks, or military posts which are to be established under the Army redistribution scheme of the Commander-in-Chief in India; and whether a map, showing the proposed changes, could be placed on the Table for the information of the House.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: I am unable to present the Return and map asked for, as details of cantonments, barracks and military posts to be established under the Army redistribution scheme are not yet settled.

State of Bengal.

MR. C. J O'DONNELL (Newington, Walworth): I beg to ask the Prime Minister a Question of which I have given private notice. Is it possible for the right hon. Gentleman to give the House an early opportunity to consider the present disturbed condition of a great Indian population of 50,000,000 in Bengal, and the acute discontent in that province caused by numerous illegalities and violences to a people peacefully protesting against an arbitrary partition of their country; whether a great meeting of the National Convention, numbering thousands of delegates was not broken up by the police?

*MR. SPEAKER: This is not an opportunity for the hon. Member to give information, only to seek it.

MR. C. J. O'DONNELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the meeting was being held on private ground, and that a number of persons were brutally assaulted by the police with batons in the presence of two members of the Legislative Council of Bengal?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think my hon. friend will see that notice ought to be given of a specific Question of that kind, especially when it is not addressed to the Minister who is most particularly conversant with the affairs of India. But, in answer to the Question of which my hon. friend has given notice, I have to say that I do not understand that the present condition of Bengal answers to the description given in the Question. My hon. friend may rest assured that the Secretary of State is giving close attention to the proceedings in the province, and there seems to be no such emergency as would justify the interruption of public business for discussing it at the present moment.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): May I ask whether it is not the fact that the advices from India are by no means of one tenor, and that the state of Bengal has been grossly exaggerated.

[No Answer was given.]

Turkey and Egypt.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I wish to ask the Secretary for Foreign Affairs a Question with regard to the Egyptian frontier. We have been scrupulously careful not to embarrass the

Government by asking Questions on the subject, and if the right hon. Gentleman, consistent with the public service, can give the House and the country some information on the point, I am sure that there will be very general satisfaction.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I quite agree that, from all that has appeared in the Press, and in view of the fact that a similar Question is to be put in another place to-day, some information on the subject should be given to the House.

The British Ambassador on Thursday presented a Note at Constantinople requesting the Porte to agree to the demarkation by Great Britain and Turkey of the line from El Rafah to the head of the Gulf of Akabah on the basis of the telegram from the Grand Vizier to the Khedive of April 8th, 1892, and pending a settlement to withdraw his troops from Tabah. We have asked for a favourable reply in ten days' time.

To explain this Note it will perhaps be convenient that I should give a short summary of the negotiations which have preceded it. Early in the year Egyptian troops were sent to occupy certain posts in the interior of the Sinai peninsula, including Tabah on the western coast of the Gulf of Akabah. On arrival at the latter post it was found that 150 Turkish troops were already in occupation. His Majesty's Government protested against the occupation by the Turks of Tabah, a place unquestionably within the Sinai peninsula, and pointed out to the Porte that if any doubt existed as to the frontier line a joint Delimitation Commission was the best solution of the question. On February 13th, Lord Cromer reported that the Turkish commandant at Akabah was demanding the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops from the Faroun Island, an island in the northern part of the Gulf of Akabah. His Majesty's ship Diana was instructed to proceed to Faroun to protect the Egyptain post there. After further representations the Sultan decided to send two officers from Constantinople to inquire into the matter, and they left for Egypt on February 20th. It was hoped the Turkish Commissioners would discuss the matter, or form part of a joint Commission of delimitation. The Turkish Commissioners, however, left Cairo and proceeded to Beirut without having communicated with the Egyptian Government, the Khedive, or Lord Cromer. On March 21st the Turkish Ambassador made a communication to the effect that as Tabah was a dependency of Akabah no objection could naturally be made to the presence there of Turkish troops, and that it was considered unnecessary to send officers there from Egypt to institute an inquiry into the question. The Sultan then authorised Mukhtar Pasha to negotiate with the Government of Egypt, and at his own request the negotiations were transferred to Cairo. Mukhtar Pasha had an interview with the Khedive, and demanded on behalf of his Government that the boundary of the Sinai peninsula should run from El Rafah to Suez and from Suez to Akabah. The Khedive in reply to these representations suggested that the telegram of April 8th, 1892, should be taken as the basis of a settlement, that the line should run from El Rafah to Akabah, joining the coast three miles west of Fort Akabah, and that the remainder of the line of frontier should be demarcated by competent surveyors. The Grand Vizer's reply to the Khedive was to the effect that the Gulf of Akabah and the Sinai peninsula were outside the territory defined in the Imperial Firman, that the telegram of April 8th, 1892, only referred to the western side of the Sinai peninsula, that the interpretation of that telegram was a matter which only concerned the Imperial Ottoman Government, that Akabah had been adopted as the headquarters of the district of Akabah, and the hope was expressed that no occasion will be afforded for interference.

I think I need only add that the delay, the extent of the demands which have been put forward by the Porte, and the tone and character of the Turkish communications to the Khedive have made it impossible to defer a settlement indefinitely, and that is why we are now pressing our original demand for a joint delimitation. I think I may claim on behalf of his Majesty's Government that they have shown great patience and moderation; but the latest developments of the Turkish demands, if admitted, will place Turkey in a position which will be a real danger not only to the freedom of the Suez Canal, but also to the liberties of Egypt and of the Khedivial dynasty. His Majesty's Government cannot be indifferent to such issues, and the importance of them makes it necessary that we should press for a settlement on the lines of the frontier of Egypt as it has existed undisputed and undisturbed from a period many years previous to the British occupation.

MR. LUPTON : Is not the matter one eminently suitable for reference to The Hague Tribunal.

[No reply was given].

Bunder Abbas—Cable Communication.

*MR. T. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that difficulties have arisen with regard to the establishment of a telegraph station at Bunder Abbas; and what steps it is proposed to take to settle the matter and secure the linking-up of Bunder Abbas by cable.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury, for Sir EDWARD GREY): Yes, Sir. From the latest information at our disposal it appears that His Majesty's resident at Bushire is hopeful of obtaining a satisfactory settlement.

Germany and the Sinai Peninsula.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the German Government has given an assurance that it would not be able to support the Porte on the question at issue respecting the Sinai Peninsula.

MR. RUNCIMAN : We are informed by the German Government that there is no foundation for the statements which have appeared in the Press that the action of the Porte respecting the Egyptian frontier has received any encouragement.

The Tea Duty.

MR. DALZIEL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been drawn to the difficulties which have arisen in consequence of the alterations made in the date fixed on which the reduction of the tea duty would become effective; and whether he will give such instructions as will prevent any hardship or loss to those engaged in the trade.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): Yes; and I have, in consultation with the Customs, made arrangements which are, I understand, regarded by the trade generally as satisfactory.

Income Tax Inquiry.

MR. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will consider the advisability of enabling the Select Committee on Income Tax Graduation to make inquiry regarding the number of persons in this country who have to pay a second tax on incomes earned in distant parts of the British Empire, and as to the number of persons who are deterred from taking up residences in this country by the imposition of this second tax; also to inquire into the number of limited liability companies trading with India and the Colonies who do not establish head offices in this country for the same reason; and to report whether a substantial rebate should be given on all incomes which have already paid income-tax within the Empire.

MR. ASQUITH: I think that the House generally will be anxious that the Committee should carry out their inquiry and report with as little delay as possible, and for this reason it does not seem to me desirable to burden the terms of reference with directions to investigate the matters referred to in the Question, which have not an immediate bearing on the subject of graduation and differentiation.

Flogging in Prisons.

MR. RICHARD HAZLETON (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that in local prisons in Ireland and Scotland flogging as a method of punishment for certain breaches of prison discipline is not permitted under any circumstances and whether he will consider the advisability of having this prohibition extended to local prisons in England.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W): Yes, Sir. The facts as to the Scotch and Irish prisons were fully considered when the present arrangement was settled by Parliament in 1898; but it was felt that, in view of the much larger size of the English prisons and the different character of the prison population, it was necessary to maintain the power to inflict corporal punishment in a restricted class of cases. Corporal punishment can only be inflicted for mutiny or for gross personal violence to prison officers, only after inquiry on oath by the visiting committee, and only when the sentence has been confirmed by the Secretary of State. The general opinion of persons who have a good knowledge of the character of the English prison population—and in this opinion I concur—is that this restricted power used only in extreme cases is necessary to protect from danger to life and limb the officers who are exposed to savage attack.

Employment of Women—Factory Order.

MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department upon what representations he has made the Draft Order (Factory and Workshops Act, 1901) re-employment between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. for women and young persons in factories in the county of London in which bookbinding is carried on, workrooms in which millinery work and dressmaking is carried on in connection with drapers' retail establishments within the city of Manchester and the borough of Salford, and factories and workshops in which the manufacture of straw hats and bonnets is carried on; whether the workpeople affected by the Order have been consulted; and, further, why the two first sections of the Order are only of local application.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have issued the draft Order in consequence of a Report submitted by the Chief Inspector of Factories embodying the results of a careful inquiry that had been made into the cases in which the 9 to 9 period of employment is being worked under existing Orders and suggesting for consideration whether it was necessary to keep these Orders alive any longer. The draft Order, which would repeal one of the existing Orders at once and the remainder after a year's grace, has been specially sent to the manufacturers affected and trade associations, including workers' associations, so that any objections to the proposed repeal may be fully stated and considered. The first two paragraphs of the Schedule are only of local application because the existing Orders are so limited.

MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD: Will the right hon. Gentleman give a list of the workers' associations to which the Order has been sent?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir.

In reply to Mr. BYLES, Mr. GLADSTONE added that it would be open to the workers to make any representations they wished.

Regent Street Arrests.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool) had given notice to ask the Home Secretary whether his attention had been drawn to the fact that in the case of Mrs. Eva D'Angely, as in that of Messrs. Gerothwohl and Lavalette, the presiding magistrate at Marlborough Street, while acquitting the accused, did not in any way censure the police for the arrest; whether he had received any report from the magistrate on the police evidence, and if so, what action he proposed to take on it. The hon. Member said that, at the request of the right hon. Gentleman, he desired to postpone this Question. However, he wished to ask whether the constable who arrested this lady was still on duty in Regent Street, and whether the right hon. Gentleman had given instructions that he should no longer be employed on that beat pending investigation.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have made and am making very careful inquiry into the subject, and I have received a full report from the magistrate who heard the case. I would suggest to the hon. Gentleman that he should defer this Question until I am able to answer the case fully. Meanwhile, I must tell him frankly that I am unable to issue the order he suggests.

LORD R. CECIL: It is a most important Question, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not overlook it.

Prison Officials' Pay.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the difference of pay existing between the subordinate ranks of the convict and local prisons; and whether it is his intention to go into the matter with a view to some improvement taking place in the remuneration of those employed in local prisons.

MR. GLADSTONE: A large number of petitions on this subject have been received from the warders of local prisons, and are now under consideration. They raise questions of importance and difficulty which cannot be hastily settled; and I can only say that they will receive the most careful consideration from the Prison Commissioners and from myself.

Treatment of Child Offenders.

MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has now received replies from the magistrates and police which will enable him to state what steps he is prepared to take, by legislation or otherwise, to secure the provision of separate courts for children, their separate detention in places other than the police court before trial, and the appointment of probation officers.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have received a large number of replies to my circular, most of them of a satisfactory character; and I hope shortly to be able to state what further steps I propose to take, particularly in the important matter of probation officers.

Metropolitan Police.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that the members of the Metropolitan Police Force are the only body of public servants in London who do not receive the privilege of one day's rest in seven, and will he consider the propriety of granting this privilege to the members of this force; and whether it would be possible, by a rearrangement of duties, to provide the additional holidays without increased expense, or, failing this, what would be the increased annual cost necessitated by the change.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have already stated, in reply to Questions in this House that I am sorry not to be able to grant additional leave as suggested. There is no possible re-arrangement of duties by which the privilege could be given without increased expense, the amount of which, as already stated, would be about £150,000 a year.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): Is it possible to give the police a fortnight instead of ten days' annual holiday?

[No Answer was returned.]

Return of Imports and Exports at Prices of 1900.

MR. BECKETT (Yorkshire, N.R. Whitby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has any information in his possession which supports the statement in the recent Return of Imports and Exports at prices of 1900 [Code 2894], that the price of machinery has varied in the same way and to the same degree as that of iron and steel; and, if so, will he give particulars.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): The Return contains no statement of the kind referred to. The hon. Member appears to have misapprehended the paragraph which explains the assumptions made for the purpose of reducing the margin of error that would have been caused by assuming that the course of price of articles whose average values are not ascertainable, has corresponded exactly to that of the whole group of articles whose average values have been ascertained. If the hon. Member desires further explanation perhaps he will call at the Board of Trade.

One Man Companies.

MR. MACLEAN (Bath): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the results in connection with what are known as one man companies, he will take into consideration the advisability of introducing legislation at an early date, in order to stop or mitigate this abuse of the law relating to limited companies.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am expecting to receive very shortly the Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to enquire what amendments are required in the Companies Acts. When I have received the Report the subject of the amendment of the Company Laws generally will have my consideration, including, of course, the point referred to in the Question.

Coal Exports to Germany.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is able to state the quantity of coal produced in Great Britain which is purchased annually by the German Government for naval purposes; and whether he has made any calculation of the saving to the German Government that will result from the remission of the export duty on coal.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The information desired is not in the possession of the Board of Trade, and the data are not available for the suggested calculation. I am not prepared to admit the implication in the Question as to the incidence of the export duty on coal.

MR. LONSDALE: Is it not possible to say what quantity of coal is purchased in this country by the German Navy?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is not the Question on the Paper. I can give the hon. Member the quantity of coal exported by this country to Germany, but I cannot from the data in our possession show the quantity intended for naval purposes.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): Cannot the right hon. Gentleman give the amount of Welsh steam coal, which is the same thing?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is quite a different matter. If the right hon. Gentleman wants that information I will try and get it.

Death Certificates issued to Friendly Collecting Societies.

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can give the number of death certificates issued to relatives of deceased members of friendly collecting societies during the period 1st January to 31st March, 1906; the number of death certificates issued to relatives of deceased members of trade unions during the period 1st January to 31st March, 1906; the number of death certificates issued to relatives of deceased assurants in the assurance companies during the period 1st January to 31st March, 1906; and whether he will state as to why a uniform charge of 1s. or 1s. 3d. per certificate of death should not apply equally in respect to claims on assurance companies as to claims on friendly collecting societies.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I am informed by the Registrar-General that the certificates referred to are issued by local registrars only, and that no returns of the numbers of such certificates are or ever have been received at the Central Office. He further states that if Returns were required they would have to be specially collected from more than 2,000 registrars in England and Wales alone, and, when obtained, the certificates could not be classified according to the descriptions in the Question. He adds that the value of such a Return would not be commensurate with the trouble and expense of its preparation. As regards the last part of the Question, I may point out that the charges referred to are fixed by statutory provisions which do not apply to assurance companies.

Registrars of Deaths and the Press.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether any Order was issued in 1904 prohibiting the registrars of births, deaths, and marriages from communicating particulars of the deaths occurring in their districts for publication in the local Press; and whether, if such an Order is now in force, there would be any objection to rescinding it.

MR. JOHN BURNS: There was no new Order on this subject in 1904, but in that year the Registrar-General issued a Circular with a view to the stricter observance of a regulation which had long been in force, and which forbids a registrar of births and deaths to publish any statement of facts respecting the registration of births or deaths without the permission of the Registrar-General. I am not prepared to interfere with the discretion of the Registrar-General in the matter.

Grove Park Workhouse—Engineers' Salaries.

MR. BARKER (Penryn and Falmouth): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has decided upon what action he will take in insisting on the Greenwich Board of Guardians carrying out the decision of the Local Government Board with reference to the increase in the salaries of the engineers at the Grove Park Workhouse; and if he is aware that the Report sent with reference to the irregular disposition of stores at this workhouse is not the Report of the original Committee that dealt with this Question.

MR. JOHN BURNS: No sanction on the part of the Local Government Board was necessary to enable the guardians to pay the increased salaries to these officers out of their own funds. The object in applying for the Board's sanction was to enable the guardians to obtain repayment of the amount from the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, but, as sanction was not given, no such repayment will be made. I am aware that two Committees reported to the guardians with reference to the irregular disposal of stores at the workhouse. The officers in question appear to have improperly received meals from the stores, and I have expressed regret that their salaries should have been increased a few months after this was discovered. I have added that I think the guardians should consider whether the additional payments should not be discontinued.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): In the event of the money being voted out of the local rates the Local Government Board will have power to surcharge it?

MR. JOHN BURNS: Not necessarily.

Teachers and Vaccination.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether unvaccinated persons are allowed to act as teachers in public elementary schools in any European country save the United Kingdom; and, if so, which are the countries in which the employment of such persons is permitted?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I do not possess the requisite information for replying to the Question; but as the matter is one of general public interest and importance I will ask my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will be so good as to obtain as full information as possible upon the point—including also the question of re-vaccination.

Secondary Schools—Denominational Disqualifications.

*MR. LEHMANN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what restrictions, if any, with regard to the religious denomination of pupils or teachers and public control over the management at present exist in the secondary schools recognised as eligible for grants by the Board; whether a local authority is allowed in the allocation of its grants of aid to distinguish between such schools on the ground of religion; and whether the Government contemplates, by legislation or otherwise, to secure that after a certain date grants shall be given only to schools in which there is no denominational disqualification of teachers or pupils, and which are subject to popular control.

MR. BIRRELL: With the hon. Member's permission, I will answer this Question as a written one.

King's Scholarship Examination.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that the last King's Scholarship Examination was held early in December last, and that the result has not yet been published; whether, in view of the fact that successful candidates have to go into college in September next, of the difficulty of finding places in college, and of the anxiety caused by the delay, he will take steps to expedite the publication of the result; and will he say whether there is any reason for the delay.

MR. BIRRELL: I must refer the hon. Member to a reply I gave to a similar Question on March 13th last.† I may, however, add that I hope that it may be possible to publish the results of the examinations held in December last and at Easter somewhat earlier than I then anticipated.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1106.

Education Bill Finance.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in arriving at the sum of £1,000,000 provided in the Education Bill, he based his estimate on the prospective increase of local burdens consequent upon the Bill, or on the existing amount of the education rate; and on what principle of calculation he has specified the sum mentioned which apparently provides only a sum of £70 for each voluntary school in England and Wales.

MR. BIRRELL: I must refer the hon. Member to my Answer to a similar Question which he asked me on April 26th.† I have nothing to add to that Answer. I do not think it in the public interest to enter upon any argumentative defence or explanation of provisions in the Education Bill by means of Question and Answer, which can better be dealt with in Committee of the House upon the Bill.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): When can we have the basis of these figures? Will it be so that we can make inquiries before the Committee stage is reached?

MR. BIRRELL: I will communicate with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject.

Hull Education Committee—Offer of Scholarships.

*SIR SEYMOUR KING: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that the Hull Education Committee offered free scholarships by an entrance examination for boys and girls who wished to enter upon an engagement as pupil teachers in any public elementary school in the city in the years 1905, 1906, and 1907, tenable for two years at a secondary school to the successful candidates at such examination, and subsequently voted bursaries to successful candidates of the value of ten pounds each for the like period, such bursaries to be paid to the parents or guardians towards their maintenance; that twelve Roman Catholic girls, children of ratepayers, who were successful candidates and intending to become pupil teachers in Roman Catholic schools, desired to receive their education as stated in their application at the recognised Roman Catholic pupil teachers' centre (an institution which has been erected and equipped by the Roman Catholic body out of their own funds at a cost of £8,000), and were deprived of their bursaries by the action of the Noncomformist majority of the Hull City Council on the ground that they must attend a council secondary school; and will he say whether the Hull Roman Catholic secondary school is recognised by the Board of Education as a secondary school without any limitation; whether the Board of Education has only temporarily recognised the council schools as secondary schools, and affixed as a condition of such recognition that they be brought up to standard by next year; and what steps he proposes to take to ensure that due consideration shall be given to denominations who are doing the work of secondary education so as to comply with the Education Act, 1902.

MR. BIRRELL: I have no official information as to the particulars mentioned by the hon. Member in the first part of his Question. The Hull Roman Catholic secondary school has been recognised by the Board for the school year 1905–1906. In regard to the continued recognition of three council schools in Hull as secondary schools, the Board have communicated certain conditions as to necessary improvements in the teaching staff and other matters, on the fulfilment of which that recognition must depend. The concluding paragraph raises a somewhat difficult point as to the limitations upon local authorities' powers in regard to the point at issue, under existing legislation.

*SIR SEYMOUR KING: Does the right hon. Gentleman approve of Roman Catholics being deprived altogether of education in the secondary schools.

MR. BIRRELL: Certainly not, Sir.

Provided Schools without Religious Teaching.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state the number of provided schools in England in which there is no religious teaching; and whether he can state the usual characteristics of the religious teaching which is given in provided schools.

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† See col. 28.

MR. BIRRELL: I have no information on the subject. But a Return has been moved for in another place which, so soon as it is completed, will provide a considerable amount of information upon the subject.

LORD R. CECIL: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when the Return will be completed?

MR. BIRRELL: I am as anxious as the noble Lord that it should be completed as soon as possible. But I have not the least control over the matter.

Zoological Gardens.

MR. MYER: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Government, taking into consideration the crowded state of the Zoological Gardens at holiday time, and the danger of panic arising, will make it one of the conditions of their tenancy that the Zoological Society shall in the interest of public safety construct an additional subway connecting the northern portion of the gardens with the southern.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): I do not think the facts of the case would justify the course proposed by my hon. friend, but I understand that the society have in contemplation the provision of an additional subway.

Irish Land Act—Treasury Interventions.

*MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury to state by whom the Treasury is moved to intervene in cases under the Irish Land Act of 1903; can it intervene *motu proprio*; will it immediately test the validity of the decision in King-Harman and Hayes, or any of the numerous cases now ruled by that decision, in which money was paid as price and bonus on house property to a person to whom that property did not belong, by a fictitious sale to a person to whom the house property already belonged; how does the Treasury insure that every transaction represents a real sale; is money advanced by the Treasury in Great Britain to finance transactions of this character; and will he name any statutory authority for the Treasury making itself a party to, and the State responsible for such transactions in Ireland.

MR. MCKENNA: The Treasury intervene in cases under the Land Purchase Act of 1903, of which they get notice from (1) the Judicial Commissioner (2) the Estates Commissioners or (3) the Land Judge, and in which public funds are or may be affected. They were not parties to the case of King-Harman and Hayes, and I gave in my Answer on Wednesday last† the reason why the Treasury do not consider that there is any ground on which they could intervene. I do not feel able to add anything to that Answer.

*MR. GINNELL: But how do they distinguish between these transactions and other cases of swindling?

MR. MCKENNA: The Treasury has to see whether any liability is likely to accrue to public funds, and in the King-Harman case they were informed that the security was adequate.

Island of Lewis—Shader Landing Place.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the cause of the delay in proceeding with the construction of a landing place at Shader Point, Island of Lewis, for which the Congested Districts Board made a grant some time since.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): On the 5th January, 1906, the county council made certain proposals for carrying out this work with the aid of a grant offered by the Congested Districts Board on 4th June, 1901, and on 18th January the Board consented. The matter therefore lies with the county and parish councils who have not made any statement as to their action.

Lochs School Board.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the election of a school board for the parish of Lochs, Island of Lewis, was recently rendered void through some of the nomination papers not reaching the returning officer by the date specified; and, seeing that this was due to the notice of the election not being posted on the school door sufficiently early, will the returning officer be asked to arrange for the election notices to be posted on the school door in future, early enough to admit of nomination papers sent by post from the Park District reaching Stornoway in time to be valid, especially having regard to the fact that a delay of some days occurs before letters posted in some parts of the Park District reach Stornoway.

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† See cols. 577–8.

MR SINCLAIR: The Department is not aware that the recent election failed through any irregularity on the part of the returning officer. A copy of the hon. Member's Question has, however, been sent to the Clerk of the School Board, who is to act again as returning officer at the new election which has been ordered, and the attention of the latter has been specially called to the provisions of the Departmental General Order which relate to the nomination of candidates.

Uig Valuation Roll.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether he is aware that out of 670 persons on the valuation roll for the parish of Uig, Island of Lewis, no less than 546 have no vote for school board elections, by reason of their rentals being less than £4; and, seeing that this results in schools being placed under the control of the factor and chiefly large farmers, Mr. Orrock, the proprietor's factor, being chairman of three of the four school boards in the island, will he take such steps as may be necessary to extend the school board franchise to all persons entitled to vote at Parliamentary and county council elections.

MR. SINCLAIR: I have to refer the hon. Member to my Answer to his Question of 26th March. Pending the issue of the Return, I can express no opinion as to the correctness of the figures quoted by the hon. Member. The composition of the board is as follows:— one farmer, two United Free Church ministers, one crofter, one merchant, one factor, one hotel keeper and small farmer. It is therefore not the case that the schools are placed under "the control of the factor and chiefly large farmers."

Hamana Croft Dispute.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that the Congested Districts Board in May last year, by their factor, let a croft at Hamana, Glendale, to John Campbell, Glasphein, Glendale; that John Campbell has taken possession of this croft, and that the Congested Districts Board have applied for interdict against him; and having regard to the difficulty a crofter has in opposing the Congested Districts Board in a court of law, will he have inquiries made into the case, and in the meantime ask for proceedings to be delayed.

MR. SINCLAIR: Inquiries are being made.

Fees on Appointment as Magistrates.

SIR J. JARDINE: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland what fees are made by persons appointed to be justices of the peace, to whom paid, and for what services; and whether any distinction is made between nominated justices and justices *ex officio*.

MR. SINCLAIR: For services in connection with intimation of appointment and attendance at administration of oaths a 5s. fee on qualifying is payable to the clerk of the peace by every justice of the peace.

Report of the Crofters' Commission.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will explain why the Report of the Crofters' Commission for 1905, which was laid upon the Table of the House on April 11th, has not yet been circulated or even supplied to the Library.

MR. SINCLAIR: The printing of the Report has just been completed, and copies of the Report will be circulated this week.

Scottish Local Government and Fishery Board Reports.

MR. MORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will say

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 834.

when the Annual Reports of the Local Government Board and the Fishery Board (Scotland) will be in the hands of Members.

MR. SINCLAIR: The Report of the Fishery Board is in the printers' hands and will be published without delay; that of the Local Government Board is on the point of being finally adjusted and will probably be available to hon. Members about a month hence.

Roxboro Road School, Limerick.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Attorney-General for Ireland whether he can say who is now the tenant of the Roxboro Road School, Limerick; how long is the present tenant in occupation; are these premises held under any trust, or does the tenant occupy any official or public position or office.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): I have referred the hon. Members' Question to the Commissioners of Education in Ireland, and am informed by the secretary to that body that the next meeting of the Standing Committee will be held on the 10th inst., after which a Report will be forwarded to me. I shall communicate the substance of the Report to the hon. Member as soon as I receive it.

MR. JOYCE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether, during the progress of the recent general election, he wrote to the town clerk of Limerick to the effect that as soon as the elections were over he would take the case of the Roxboro Road School in hand; and, if so, what steps he has taken since that time in fulfilment of that undertaking.

MR. CHERRY: I have made full inquiries as to this matter, and find that the school referred to was originally built in 1837 at a cost of £1,672, of which sum the greater part was presented by the grand juries of the county and county of the city of Limerick. The school was discontinued in the year 1872, and the school buildings fell into dilapidation. Possession of these buildings was afterwards acquired by the incumbent of Trinity Church, Limerick, in consideration of a sum of £20 from a Mrs. Hall, who claimed ownership of same. Her title appears to have been doubtful, and ultimately the clergyman referred to agreed to pay an annual rent of £20 to the Commissioners of Education for same. The annual cost of repairs of the premises, however, exceeds this sum, so that the property is practically valueless; and the only endowment attached to the school consists of a sum of £63 1s. 6d. Consols and £64 3s. 7. cash. The cost of any legal proceedings by way of information or otherwise to settle a scheme for this school would most probably far exceed the total value of the property involved, and I have consequently decided not to institute any such proceedings.

Future Tenants in Ireland.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will grant the following Return on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for North Westmeath.

Future Tenants (Ireland) — Return showing, by counties, in the subjoined form, the number of persons now in Ireland excluded from the land courts as future tenants :—

County.	Not physically evicted by Sheriff, but created Future Tenants by—				Physically evicted by sheriff.	Totals.
	Land Law Act, 1881.	Land Law Act, 1887, Section 7.	Acceptance of court lease or argeement.	Other means.		

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Land Commission inform me that they have no materials from which they could supply the information asked for, and I am therefore unable to grant the Return. It is obvious that the information could only be obtained, if at all, by exhaustive local inquiries extending over the whole of Ireland.

Irish Teachers' Salaries.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the salaries of teachers of Irish primary schools are only two-thirds of English and four-sevenths of those of Scotch teachers; whether having regard to the difficulty of finding a sufficient supply of properly qualified teachers in some districts, he will take any steps to remedy this difference; and if so, at what time and in what manner he proposes to do so.

MR. BRYCE: The Commissioners of National Education have furnished me with figures which show that the fact is substantially as stated in the first part of the Question so far as regards the masters, but that in the case of the mistresses the difference between Irish salaries and those in Great Britain is less marked. In the opinion of the Commissioners, these differences are largely due to the greater amount of local aid given in Great Britain, and to the fact that schools in Ireland are relatively far more numerous and consequently far smaller than in Great Britain. I have already stated that the whole question of National School teacher's salaries is to receive consideration, but I can make no further statement on the subject at present.

Irish Representative Church Body's Estates.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number, Poor Law valuation, and present rental of the landed estates held in Ireland, either as owners in fee or mortgagees, by the Irish Representative Church Body, the counties in which they are respectively situated, the amount of the mortgage on each estate. the number of such estates sold under the Land Purchase Acts, 1885, 1891, 1896, and 1903 respectively, with the average price paid in each case.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that the only information asked for in this Question which they are in a position to give, is that relating to sales under the Land Purchase Acts by the Representative Church Body. Under the Act of 1885, one holding in county Cork was sold in 1887, for £1,000, which amounted to twenty years purchase of the rent; and one holding in county Leitrim was sold in 1894 for £750, being seventeen years purchase. Under the Act of 1896, one holding in county Clare was sold in 1900 for £2,100, being twenty years purchase. Under the Act of 1903, one holding in county Kilkenny was sold in 1905 for £460, being twenty-three years purchase.

Kerry Evicted Tenants.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many evicted tenants have been reinstated in county Kerry under the operation of the Land Act 1903; what estates are these situated on; how many other evicted tenants have sent in applications for reinstatement; and whether, seeing the disappointment and suffering caused to these people by the delay in having them reinstated, steps will be taken to give such further powers to the Estates Commissioners as they may need to reinstate every evicted tenant in his former holding in the shortest possible time.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners have received information of restoration, up to 30th April, of thirty-five evicted tenants in county Kerry, namely, twenty-five on the Warden Estate, two on the Listowel Estate, and one each on the Murphy, Harley, McCartie, Coltsman, Mahony, Day, Fitzgerald, and Sandes Estates. The Commissioners have received applications for reinstatement from 430 other evicted tenants in the same county. As I have already announced, an additional staff of inspectors to inquire into the claims of evicted tenants has now been appointed, and these will enter upon their work without delay, as I stated last Thursday.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman make representations to the Estates Commissioners not to sanction sales of estates unless the untenanted lands on the estates are sold with them.

MR. BRYCE: I will convey to the Commissioners any information the hon. Member may have, but I cannot interfere with their discretion.

Rae Estate, Keel, County Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board have inspected and offered a price for the Rae Estate, Keel, county Kerry, at present held by the Irish Church Body; whether that price has been several times refused by them; and whether, if tenants in congested districts who are willing to pay the price fixed by a Government valuer are thus prevented from getting the benefits of the Land Purchase Act by syndicates of this class, steps will be taken to have the law so amended as to give compulsory powers to the Congested Districts Board to deal with all such cases.

MR. BRYCE: I am afraid that I am not in a position to add anything to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member's similar Question on 5th March.†

Flogging in Irish Convict Prisons.

MR. HAZLETON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that certain breaches of prison discipline in convict prisons in Ireland are punishable by flogging, whilst for exactly similar breaches of discipline in local prisons in England flogging is, under no circumstances, permitted; and whether, in view of this difference, he will consider the advisability of abolishing flogging altogether as a method of punishment for breaches of discipline in convict prisons.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that in both convict and local prisons in England flogging is legal and permitted for the offences of mutiny, incitement to mutiny, and gross personal violence to an officer or servant of the prison. In Ireland, flogging in local prisons is not legal in any circumstances; and flogging in convict prisons is in fact permitted for the same offences as in England, although its infliction is not confined by law to these particular cases. So far, therefore, as there is a difference, the use of this punishment is more restricted in Irish prisons than in English. As I informed the hon. Member recently, flogging is rarely resorted to in Ireland, one case only having occurred in 1905.

MR. HAZLETON: How many representations have been received from the Transvaal Government with regard to the flogging of British subjects in Irish prisons?

MR. BRYCE: I have no knowledge of that.

Lord De Vesci and Evicted Tenants.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will instruct the Estates Commissioners to approach Lord De Vesci, Abbeyleix, who has recently succeeded to the property, with a view to the restoration of his evicted tenants, eleven in number, there being 400 acres of untenanted land on the estate.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that it is their intention to approach the owner in this case, in accordance with the regulations of 13th February last.

Mrs. Adair's Mountmellick Estate.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether agreements for purchase have reached the Estates Commissioners in connection with eight holdings on the estate of Mrs. Adair, near Mountmellick, Queen's County; and whether he is aware that one of those is in the occupation of a planter who came into possession since January, 1901; and can he say what course the Estates Commissioners propose taking in this case, in view of the fact that the evicted tenant is in the locality and claims his farm.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that agreements for purchase on this estate have recently been lodged with them. The tenancy in one of the cases is described as a "future tenancy" created in December, 1902. The course adopted by the Commissioners in the case of recently created tenancies is indicated in my reply to the Question of the hon. Member for North Westmeath on Wednesday last. The Commissioners are unable to say what decision they may arrive at in this particular case until an inspector has visited the estate and reported on the case.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 56, 57.

Mullaghduff Evicted Tenant.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application for reinstatement and a resolution from the Derrylin Branch of the United Irish League on behalf of Patrick M'Avinne, an evicted tenant who was evicted from his farm in Mullaghduff, now held by Timothy Murphy at a rent of £20, Patrick M'Avinne's rent having been £33 11s. 5d.; and, if so, whether, in view of the fact that this man was evicted for non-payment of one year of heavy rack rent, and the sufferings of himself and his family, especial attention will be given to his case.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received the application and resolution referred to, and will duly inquire into and consider the application.

Irish County Court Criers.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the criers of certain county courts in Ireland are in the habit of levying fees from suitors in respect of the grant and transfers of licences, decrees in equity cases, remitted and jury cases, and other proceedings; will he say whether the salary of county court criers is so small as barely to defray their travelling expenses; whether he will take any steps with a view to putting an immediate stop to the exactions above referred to; and whether he will consider the advisability of providing more adequate salaries for the criers.

MR. BRYCE: I have no information to the effect stated in the first part of the Question. If any illegal exactions are made, as alleged, the matter would appear to be one for the county court judge to deal with. The salaries of the criers, which are fixed by statute, are intended to remunerate them for their services and expenses. It is the duty of county councils to pay these salaries, but beyond this, neither the council nor the Local Government Board have any jurisdiction in the matter. I am not aware that the salaries are inadequate.

Morrogh Bernard Estate, Kerry.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Morrogh Bernard estate, county Kerry, has yet come before the Estates Commissioners in connection with proceedings for sale; whether he is aware that no settlement has been carried out for the reinstatement of some evicted tenants whose farms are still vacant; and whether he will take steps to prevent any sale being sanctioned on this estate until all the evicted tenants are satisfactorily dealt with.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that an originating application in respect of the sale of this estate was lodged with them on January 2nd, 1906. The Commissioners have been in communication with the vendor upon the subject of the restoration of the evicted tenants, and the applications of these persons have been referred to an inspector for inquiry and report. The inspector's report has not yet been considered by the Commissioners, and in the meantime they are unable to say what action they will take in the matter.

Irish Land Commission Staff.

MR. HAZLETON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that since 1903 a number of appointments under the Irish Land Commission have been given to persons having no previous connection with that office over the heads of others who have been continuously employed in it for periods up to sixteen years; and, if so, whether this practice is to be continued.

MR. BRYCE: I am not aware to what particular appointments the hon. Member refers. A skilled accountant was recently appointed assistant to the head of a department in the Land Commission, under circumstances which I explained on Thursday last in Answer to a Question by the hon. Member for the Leix Division,† and several clerks with legal qualifications have also been appointed from time to time. The work of the Land Commission has greatly expanded since the passing of the Act of 1903, and the appointments mentioned have been necessary. The claims of the existing staff to promotion are recognised in all fit cases.

Irish Agricultural Inquiry Committee.

MR. HAMMOND (Carlow): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the resolution recently adopted by the County Carlow Joint Technical Instruction Committee to the effect that, in view of the Government's pledge to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas, the Committee desired to express its dissatisfaction with the constitution of the Lord-Lieutenant's Committee appointed to inquire into the working of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, Ireland, and suggesting that Irish educational interests should be represented on the Committee; and if he will recommend the adoption of this suggestion.

MR. BRYCE: I have received the resolution referred to. If effect were to be given to all the suggestions that have been made for the enlargement of the Committee, it would reach unmanageable dimensions. Ample opportunity will be given for bringing before the Committee such educational matters as fall within its scope, and it already contains members well qualified to deal with those matters.

Clare Slob Lands.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that tenants holding small farms on the River Fergus, County Clare, the valuation being from £50 to £60, are obliged to keep up the banks, in some cases half a mile in length, that protect slob lands valued at £3,500, and that, if the bank is broken by the tide in stormy weather damage may be done to the tenants on the slob lands of the large valuation; and will he take steps to secure that the tenants or tenant on the small holding shall not be responsible for such damage.

*MR. BRYCE: The question is being investigated by a Royal Commission, and any facts of this nature might be laid before the Commission by the hon. Member.

Infant Mortality.

MR. GODFREY BARING (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to that passage in the Report of the Registrar-General dealing with the high death rate amongst infants; and whether he has considered the desirability of appointing a Royal Commission to inquire into infantile mortality and its causes.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): My attention has been called to the part of the Report referred to. The subject of infant mortality and its causes is receiving the careful consideration of the Government, but we do not see our way at present to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into this most important subject.

Fair Wage Clause in Government Contracts.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, in view of the fact that the fair wage clause in Government contracts does not preclude unfair or sweating firms from tendering for, and obtaining such contracts, he will consider the advisability of appointing a small Committee of the House to revise and bring up to date such fair wage clause in order to meet the practical purpose to which the principle of fair wage was intended to apply.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir, it is not thought necessary to appoint such a Committee as the hon. Member suggests. There may no doubt be isolated instances in which the evils which the fair wages clause was designed to prevent still arise in connection with Government contracts, but there is every reason to believe that the clause is a very effective instrument against sweating, and that cases of evasion rarely pass undetected. From inquiries I have made I think the hon. Member may rest assured that the various Departments concerned have taken the necessary steps to secure the equitable operation of this clause.

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† See Column 701-2.

MR. O'GRADY: Will the right hon. Gentleman give instructions to the various Government Departments defining the real meaning of the clause.

SIR H. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: I will inquire whether such instructions are necessary.

Plural Voting Bill.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether it is intended to pass the Plural Voting Bill during the present session; and whether it is his purpose to follow the constitutional practice and recommend His Majesty to dissolve Parliament immediately following the passage of a measure which would effect a fundamental change in the system of electoral representation.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am sorry to say anything which would disappoint the hon. Member of the fulfilment of his obvious desire that after the passing of this Bill there should be the earliest possible appeal to the country. But I can really see no reason for adopting the course that he suggests. No doubt in the case of the passage of large Reform Bills it has been the practice to dissolve Parliament purely as a matter of Parliamentary convenience. Important though it is, the Plural Voting Bill it hardly a Reform Bill of the first magnitude, and even if it were I am not aware of any constitutional understanding or usage tending to prevent Parliament from continuing its labours after the Bill had passed. From the point of view of Parliamentary convenience I cannot help thinking that the dissolution which the hon. Member so ardently desires would be generally regarded as undesirable.

MR. CROOKS: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the importance of getting the Bill through the House before the Dulwich election? It would be very helpful.

[No Answer was returned.]

CROWN LANDS BILL.

Reported from the Select Committee, without Amendment.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 159.]

Bill re-committed to a Committee of the whole House for Monday next.

DEAN FOREST BILL.

Reported from the Select Committee, without Amendment.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 160.]

Bill re-committed to a Committee of the whole House for Monday next.

NEW BILLS.

EDUCATION OF THE BLIND BILL.

"To provide for the Technical Education, Employment, and Maintenance of the Blind," presented by Mr. Steadman; supported by Mr. Summerbell, Mr. Crooks, and Mr. Clynes; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, June 19th, and to be printed. [Bill 195.]

GROCERS' LICENCES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To abolish Dealers' or Grocers' Licences in Scotland," presented by Mr. Rainy; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Lamont, Mr. Findlay, and Mr. Cameron Corbett; to be read a second time upon Monday, May 28th, and to be printed. [Bill 196.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Sir John Dickson-Poynder be a Member of the Select Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill."—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) expressed a hope that this Motion would not be pressed at the moment. The Bill was intended to recast the law with regard to housing, giving railway and tramway companies certain powers that they did not possess in the matter, while also conferring a power to amend the by laws framed to secure adequate housing accommodation for labourers in rural districts. He complained that no Member of the Labour Party occupied a place on the Committee which was to deal with a question with which the working classes were ultimately concerned. If the Motion were pressed they might have to press the opposition to the fullest extent the forms of the House would permit.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) said that he was sorry he could not accept the view of the hon. Member. He denied the statement that there was no Member of the Labour Party on the Committee. It was not the turn of the Labour Party for which the hon. Member spoke to have a representative on this Committee; it was the turn of the Labour Party sitting on the Government side of the House. The Labour Party as a whole had the right to one representative on the Committee, but the Labour Party was divided and sat on both sides of the House. He had tried to observe a scrupulous attitude of fairness and justice throughout the session in the appointment of Members to these Committees, and he maintained that the Labour Party sitting on the Opposition Benches had received more favourable treatment from the Government than ever before. For example, last week the Local Taxation Committee was appointed, and on that Committee there was a representative of the Independent Labour Party. For the Income Tax Committee, selected two or three days later, he had purposely left out from the names of the Committee a representative of the Labour Party on the other side and had included a member of the Party from the Government side of the House. The hon. Member for Barnard Castle and the hon. Member for Leicester came to him and represented that, as this Income Tax Committee was one directly affecting the labour interest, it was not fair to leave out of that Committee a representative of the Independent Labour Party. He thought the argument was a good one, and after consultation with the Chancellor of the Exchequer he included the hon. Member for Merthyr on that Committee. He had to ask the assent of the Irish Party and of the Opposition to the enlargement of that Committee, and there was some little difficulty, and he had further to enlarge it in order to preserve the balance. Of the two Committees—the Income Tax Committee and the Housing of the Working Classes Committee — hon. Members below the gangway said they would prefer the nomination of a member of the Independent Labour Party on the former. ["No, no."] The hon. Member for Barnard Castle if he were present would bear him out on that.

MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester) said that both the hon. Member for Barnard Castle and himself said that the Housing of the Working Classes Committee was a matter which would have to be discussed when it came before the House.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY said the hon. Member was quite right. The hon. Member said they would not pledge themselves in any way, and he replied:—"No. I am telling you what I intend to do. When we nominate the Housing of the Working Classes Committee we shall nominate a Labour Member from this side and not from that." The hon. Member for Merthyr claimed for the Labour Party double the amount of representation that they were entitled to. If they got that representation who was to suffer? Was the Irish Party, the Opposition, or the Liberal Party to suffer? The Liberal Party nominated only eight members instead of nine and then there was the Labour Party sitting on the Liberal side of the House, whose interest and welfare he declined to sacrifice to the hon. Members below the opposite gangway.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich) rose to continue the discussion.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. There can only be one speech on each side.

MR. CROOKS: Then may I move the substitution of another name for that of Sir John Dickson-Poynder?

*MR. SPEAKER: No; the Question having been put must now be decided.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 335; Noes, 85. (Division List No. 69.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Acland-Hood, RtHn.SirAlexF.
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Astbury, John Meir
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt.Hon.SirH
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury,E.)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, RtHn.A.J.(CityLond.)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Baring, Hon. Guy(Winchester)
Barker, John
Barlow, J. Emmott(Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.
Beach,Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W.(T'w'rHamlets,S.Geo.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowles, G. Stewart
Brace, William
Branch, James
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bryce,Rt.Hn.James (Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Buxton,Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, W.
Coates, E.Feetham(Lewisham)
Coats, Sir T. Glen(Renfrew,W.)
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, SirW.J.(S.Pancras,W.)
Corbett,C H(Sussex, E Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Courthope, G. Loyd
Cox, Harold
Craig, C. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Craik, Sir Henry
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh,S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras,N
Dobson, Thomas W.
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duckworth, James
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunoon,Roberts(Lan'rk,Govan
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fell, Arthur
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J.
Glendinning, R. G.
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haddock, George R.
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Helmsley, Viscount
Henderson,J.M. (Aberdeen,W.)
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Hervey, F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'd
Higham, John Sharp
Hill, Sir Clement(Shrewsbury)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, W.Bateman(Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.SirJohn H.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col. W
Keswick, William
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon.FrederickWm.
Lamont, Norman
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lea, Hugh Cecil(St.Pancras,E.
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire,Wirral)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon.David
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long, Col.CharlesW.(Evesham
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lupton, Arnold
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald,J.M.(FalkirkB'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Maddison, Frederick
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon(Launceston)
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter

Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, C. N. (Doncaster
Nicholson, W. G. (Petersfield)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Shee, James John
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pease, H. Pike (Darlington)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Price, R. John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas (W.Monm'h
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Robertson, SirGScott(Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rothschild, Hon. LionelWalter
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester)
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
Stanley, HnA. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Starkey, John R.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Talbot, RtHn. J. G. (Oxf'dUniv.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Valentia, Viscount
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Wallace, Robert
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Ward, W. Dudley(Southam p'n
Wason, Eugene(Clackmannan)
Wason, JohnCathcart(Orkney)
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson, A. (ElginandNairn
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J. T(Huddersf'd
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Baldwin, Alfred
Barnard, E. B.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Bennett, E. N.
Blake, Edward
Bottomley, Horatio
Bull, Sir William James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Byles, William Pollard
Cogan, Denis J.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dillon, John
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fletcher, J. S.
Flynn, James Christopher
Ginnell, L.
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Hodge, John
Hudson, Walter
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lundon, W.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.)
MacVeigh, Chas. (Donegal, E.)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Mooney, J. J.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murnaghan, George
Hurphy, John
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford

Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'm't'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Seddon, J.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Snowden, P.
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Wardle, George J.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wilkie, Alexander
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and Mr. Barnes.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Major Dunne be one other member of the Select Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes Amendment Bill."—(*Mr. Whitely.*)

MR. CROOKS said he rose to move the adjournment of the debate. The hon. Gentleman the Parliamentary Secretary of the Treasury did not understand the difference between their argument as to their right occasionally—not on every Committee—to representation, and the argument the hon. Gentleman himself had used, because it was not fair to say that in the House there were two Labour Parties. There was only one Labour Party in the House. The representatives whom the hon. Gentleman claimed as a Labour Party were elected to support the Liberal Party, pure and simple, and it was therefore a little invidious for the hon. Gentleman to choose from that Party certain Members, and declare that they represented the Labour Party. They might just as well appoint a Liberal Member in the place of a Nationalist to serve on a Committee on the ground that he was a sympathiser with the cause of Home Rule. He objected to their taking a section of the Liberal Party and declaring that it represented the Labour Party. The housing question was one of the questions which the Labour Party could seriously claim to know something about, and they contended that they were entitled to a representative on the Committee who really understood the lodger—the one-room man—side of the question. He hoped the hon. Gentlemon would allow the debate to be adjourned, so that they could have a quiet talk over the matter. They did not want to enforce anything; they rather wanted to encourage the hon. Gentleman to do the right thing. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Crooks.*)

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY said the matter would have to be decided by the House as to whether these Committees should be actually representative of the House or not. The question to be decided was whether a Party which had only a right to one-twenty-third representation could legitimately claim one-eleventh. He said they could not, and the hon. Gentleman's argument that his Party was the only Labour Party in the House was, he ventured to say, a mistake altogether. Was not the hon. Member for Birkenhead a representative of Labour? Was he not a greater expert in regard to this matter than any hon. Member below the gangway on the Opposition side? He would agree to the adjournment of the debate on the understanding that the appointment of the Committee was put down as the second order to-morrow and the 11 o'clock rule suspended, so that the question could be settled after that hour.

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.) I move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): I have to thank the Minister for Education for having informed me by a note which I received some three hours ago that he intended to take the course which he has in fact pursued. It is the usual course, but some doubts had been aroused in my mind this morning when I read, in several important journals, a confident expectation not only that the Minister for

Education would speak first in support of the Bill for which he is responsible, but also, so it was stated, that he was in a position to announce two or three important concessions which might go far to mitigate the wrath that has been excited by the Bill before the House. Had he taken that course the Government would have invited us to a discussion. As he has not, the Government challenge us to a conflict; and we accept the challenge. We have not to deal to-day with some imaginary Bill, amended in this or that particular, full of sweetness and light. We have to deal with this Bill, and to it we offer a most uncompromising opposition. With its five parts and its forty clauses, it opens up a field of acute controversy so vast that it would be impossible to survey it, and still less to traverse it, within the limits of any speech which I should dream of inflicting upon the House. But that does not make my task any the harder. I do not feel under an obligation at this stage of our proceedings to deal in any detail with many of the subsequent parts of the Bill, not because we do not entertain very grave objections to Parts II, III, and IV, but because the objections which lie against those parts on the merits are in every case enhanced by the nature and character of Part I. I think I can make that plain without making any undue draft upon the patience of the House. Part II seems to us to call for very active opposition. It may be that the Minister in charge of the Bill will be able to allay some of our apprehensions. For my part I feel that no doubt, owing to the exigencies of time, he did not handle this part of the Bill in the First Reading debate so fully and so explicitly as the occasion seemed to demand. If I understand Part II aright, under contingencies which are not remote and which may be brought very near when Part I is in full operation, the training colleges of all denominations will be brought within the scope of Part II. I shall be glad if that is not the case. It may be said that much of the language employed in Part II is copied from other enactments—the Charitable Trusts Acts and the Endowed Schools Act. I think that is true; but that does not mitigate our opposition to Part II of the Bill. Under the Charitable Trusts Acts the powers to make schemes were very limited. In every case of an endowment of a value greater than £50 a year action could only be taken with the consent of the governing bodies. In other cases, action could only be taken on application; and in all those cases there was an appeal. Under the Endowed Schools Act the powers were greater, but the objects for which those powers could be used were far more limited. Those Acts were of a temporary character. They did not apply to any endowment in the future, in practice, at any rate, after the year 1869. They did not apply to any endowment even after the year 1819 except with consent. All this legislation, which did, I admit, place from time to time considerable powers in the hands of the Charity Commissioners or of the Board of Education, was of a limited and temporary character, and, in practice, was only brought into play in order to abate something which could be regarded, if not as a scandal, at any rate as an inevitable diversion of a trust from its original purpose. But this legislation in Part II is not of a temporary character, and its purpose is not to better the application of funds in the direction of the intention of those who subscribed them. The whole intention of Part II is that the Board of Education—that is to say, the Government and the Minister of the day—should have power to operate on any endowment in order, not to abate a scandal, not to improve the application in accordance with the wishes of the original donors, but in order to render educational endowments—mark the words—"as serviceable as possible for educational purposes of the time." It sounds a laudable object; but who is the judge of what educational purposes are? [AN HON. MEMBER: The House of Commons.] The Board of Education; under Clause 33, subsection 2, it is the Board of Education, and only the Board of Education, which is to deem what an educational purpose is; because the power given to the Charity Commissioners under another section is only to state the fact that an endowment is connected with education, and not to define what an educational purpose is. Under Clause 16 of Part II, if I read it aright, this Board of Education, or any subsequent Board of Education, is bound to distinguish between what it deems to be an educational purpose and any denominational purpose, and is bound in every case, no matter what the trust deeds may say, or what the intention of the funds may have been, to subordinate the denominational purpose to what they deem to be an educational purpose. Part II. legislates to this effect—that any denominational endowment is not an educational purpose, but that it is another purpose, which, within narrow limits and by the good will and indulgence of a single Minister and his colleagues, may not be diverted entirely from the purpose for which the money was originally bestowed. Under Part II. all the limitations and all the restrictions as to the scope and object of the Charitable Trusts Acts and the Endowed Schools Act are swept away. All these powers, so enlarged, are concentrated in the hands of a single Minister, and that Minister is absolved from doing what the Courts, whose direction is now withdrawn, have always done in the past —from giving his jurisdiction in accordance with the wishes of those who originally subscribed these sums. I will not elaborate that because I have already spoken at greater length than I intended upon this point; but I may add that, if Part I. achieves the results which its authors seem to contemplate, if it destroys denominational teaching throughout all the elementary schools of the country, then the importance of other institutions to support the same object becomes less. It is diminished, and we come back to Part I. of the Bill.

The same is the case if I touch on Part III. I believe that under Part III. "Miscellaneous Provisions," heavy burdens, becoming increasingly onerous, will be placed upon the rates of the rural districts of England. It may be that in Clause IV. the Government have attempted to lighten the impact of that heavy weight. They say that for certain purposes only one quarter of the cost is to fall upon the parish. Yes, but they have omitted, and the omission is significant, the word "improvement." One quarter of the cost of providing schools is to fall on the parish; but in how many cases is a completely new school going to be built, and in how many cases are the existing schools going to be enlarged? And for that there is no remedy in the only clause which attempts to mitigate the burden to fall on the rates. I admit that the Government extend the period for the repayment of sums that have been borrowed; but is that a blessing to the rural districts of England? We have heard hon. Gentlemen now sitting on the other side decry from these benches again and again the practice of saddling posterity with the debts of the present. If that be unwise in the case of an Empire with a yearly income of from £150,000,000 to £170,000,000, is it not folly, is it not madness, when you are dealing with a poor rural parish to say that debts may be incurred for purposes which few desire, and that the burden may be spread over nearly two generations? There is also to be a grant-in-aid of £1,000,000. That will not go very far if Part I. is carried as it stands, and if it carries out the intentions of the authors of the Bill. And, on the other side of the account, so far as higher education is concerned, by withdrawing all the boroughs and all the urban districts with a population of 50,000, you have taken what I may call the rateable plum out of the country, and you leave only the poorest and most backward districts to bear the burden, it may be of fantastic experiments, in the direction of higher education. And for these experiments, conducted by an educational authority which for the purposes of quiet villagers is as remote as Whitehall, which does not know what their lives are, that authority is allowed, nay encouraged, to spend any amount of money, and to raise any rate it chooses. The 2d. limit is withdrawn. All this may be very well from the point of view of education. I say it is intolerable when you increase the cost of education, not for an educational object, but for an object which has nothing to do with education. It might be right, though I think in that direction we ought to march prudently, to rate the rural districts up to any figure you please for the sake of higher education; but it cannot be right to do that when, at the same time, you are saddling them with the rent and with the cost of repairs of schools with which in the main they are very well satisfied. You are adding that charge to the cost of education, and, therefore, the objections which lie against Parts II. and III. on the merits are enhanced because of the nature of Part I. of the Bill.

I am not going to be led away into discussing Part IV. of the Bill. On the face of it it seems to me to be flagrantly unjust to England, because Members who sit for Welsh seats are going to speak and to vote during the whole of the debates on Part I. of the Bill, which applies to England, but they will go off with separate benefits. They will be made the absolute arbiters of the fate of every man who differs from them in religion from one end of Wales to the other. There is not in the House of Commons a single Unionist Member from Wales. There is not a single Welsh county council upon which Churchmen have a majority or even an effective voice, and yet all these enormous powers conferred upon the Board of Education by Part II. of the Bill are going to be transferred to a body composed of delegates from the Welsh county councils — every power except any which may be excepted by Order in Council. This House has little or no control over Orders in Council, and therefore the fortunes, the possessions, and the religious liberty of the minorities in Wales are being handed over to a delegation from the county councils, who differ from them profoundly on all those questions and have shown an almost implacable spirit in the course of this controversy, and at the same time the protection of effective debate in this House is to be denied to these minorities. That is a position which is flagrantly unjust. But its injustice again, as in the case of Part II., is increased when we consider the nature and the character of Part I. of this Bill, for under Part I. all those fabrics towards which the minorities in Wales have contributed, of which they are proud, and to which they look for the protection of the religious views which they are entitled as free citizens to hold, will, with possibly exceptions which need hardly be considered, be transferred from them to those against whom they have been in sharp controversy during the last ten or even thirty years. [MINISTERIAL cheers.] That is applauded on the other side.

Let me refer to Part I. of the Bill. In Part I. of the Bill there is a violation of the principle of religious equality. That in itself is unjust; that in itself calls for our strenuous and uncompromising opposition, unless and until you so amend the Bill as to make it consistent with the principle of religious equality, and it bears other evils in its train. We hold that the two things for which we care depend upon the preservation of the principle of religious equality. We may be right or wrong, but in the integrity of our hearts we believe that the continuous maintenance of any form of religious instruction in our schools depends largely upon the preservation of the principle of religious equality. We believe, in the second place, that the degree—I shall develop this later—to which it is possible to uphold and give effect to the right of the parents depends largely upon preserving the principle of religious equality. You concede that right in theory in certain clauses in this Bill. We claim that the right of the parent is to have his child brought up in the religion which the parent prefers, and to have his child taught by those who believe in the religious instruction. You concede that in theory. [Cries of "No."] Well, that is denied. I should have thought that it was conceded by Clauses 3 and 4. Otherwise, why were these clauses introduced into the Bill at all? But I admit that the concession is of very little value, because when dealing with this right of the parent you limit the operation to non-provided schools. Why? The parent has the right; it exists independent of the accident which has given this or that character to the school, but you fetter the exercise of this right, you imperil its continuance, and you make no reasonable provision for the future. If parents now have a right, which ought to be accorded in so far as that is possible, to choose the kind of religious instruction which their children shall have, why is that right to be denied practically in the future, when by the automatic increase of the population there will be many more parents with similar desires? The whole of this is illogical. That is not a very grave charge to bring against a Bill if it departs from logic in order to meet the exigencies of the people for whom it is brought in. If it does not, if that Bill goes out in this or that direction apparently only to inflict injury upon some classes of the population, then, I think, the charge that it is illogical and irrational is one which will have to be met. We hold that so far as the State is concerned it ought to be neutral. I commend that to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, who seems to challenge my zeal in upholding the rights of parents. I assert that in the past the State has been neutral. ["Oh."] When

I made that assertion during the First Reading debate it was greeted, as it has been greeted this afternoon, with tones of dissent and almost derision, but that is not enough to controvert a statement which is made in all earnestness and seriousness by a Member of this House. More is wanted. It is necessary, not that I should be interrupted in the course of my speech, but that in the course of the debate someone should get up in his place to say that in such a year by such an Act the State abandoned its attitude of neutrality, and I defy anyone to do it.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): 1902.

MR. WYNDHAM: No. Hon. Members will have to make that good. They will have to show that the Act of 1902 gave facilities to some persons which it denied to others, and inflicted disabilities on some. I have quoted before—why should I quote again?—the opinion of Mr Sidney Webb. If we have to defend the Act of 1902 again we shall be perfectly ready to do it. Until it is proved by argument that the State did depart from that attitude I shall declare that it did not. Until the Minister of Education brought in this Bill, for which he is responsible, the State, in my judgment, had preserved a neutral attitude towards those who, on the one hand, prefer, and we think they have a right to prefer, that religious instruction should be of a definite character, and that it should be given by competent persons in school hours, and, on the other hand, those of our fellow citizens who prefer, as they have a perfect right to do, that religious instruction should be of an undenominational character, that if they are satisfied with the Bill denominational instruction should be given only by the good nature of any one who cares to give it, and that it should be given out of school hours. I hold that the State should hold the balance equally between these two great sections. But taking the facts as they are, the schools in this country in which religious education of the first kind is given number something over 14,200. They are two-thirds of the schools of this country, and more than half the children of the country are being educated in them. Under Clause 1 of the Bill, with an exception which I promise to deal with as fairly as I can, the rule is that all those schools are to be transferred or converted from the kind of school which many prefer into the kind of school which others prefer. The rule is, with certain exceptions, that from all these schools the religious teaching to which millions of our countrymen attach immense importance is to be abandoned, that the teachers belonging to the various denominations who have perhaps joined the teaching profession because they cared more about these matters than about the mere curriculum of secular education are silenced. They are not to be allowed to teach. That is a great interference with the liberty of the subject, and it is resented by a great body of the teachers. Moreover, owing to the operation of the third part of the Bill, some of these teachers may find that their occupation is gone. They may lose their posts. You may say that you contemplated that contingency, and that you made provision for it. Yes, the Government made provision for that in Clause 7, Sub-section 4. I have received a letter from a teacher directing my attention to this sub-section, which says—

> "Any teacher employed at the time of the passing of this Act in an existing voluntary school who loses his employment by reason of the school ceasing to be a public elementary school in consequence of this Act, shall be entitled, in accordance with regulations made for the purpose by the Treasury and the Board of Education, notwithstanding anything in the Elementary School Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1898, or the rules made under that Act, to pay contributions to the deferred annuity fund under that Act during any time (not exceeding one year after the date at which he so loses his employment) in which he is not employed in recorded service, and to reckon the time in respect of which contributions are so made as if it were recorded service."

He suggested that the Minister for Education might borrow something from the proclamation recently issued to Chinese labourers on the Rand and insert at the end "An exceptional act of benevolence of this kind ought to excite your gratitude." We do not attach great importance to the amount of mere money involved in this huge transfer of property from one purpose to another, but it has a bearing on the argument. It does, at any rate, attest the earnestness and the zeal of those who contributed such sums to purposes which this Bill will go far to destroy. There has been a controversy as to the amount of the property involved. When my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition introduced the Act of 1902 he put the value of the schools at £26,000,000. That figure was criticised on the basis of a Blue-book which was published dealing with the amounts of building grants towards the cost of the erection of these fabrics. But that Blue-book states that it is incomplete. It took no account of any sums which had been contributed before 1839 and after 1875, and only in certain cases was it able to be apprised of the sums contributed between 1839 and 1851. But in the diocese of Wakefield—not a selected diocese—it is possible to say how much has been actually spent on its ninety-six schools, as all the accounts have been kept. The Blue-book figures given for these schools are £112,000. The actual money spent on these schools between 1830 and 1902, as revealed by the accounts, was £350,000. That shows the measure of the error, not of the Blue-book, which states that it is incomplete, but of those who take the figures of the Blue-book as if they were complete. Therefore, the amount of voluntary contributions towards these schools was not £14,000,000, minus £1,500,000, as some people said, but no less a sum than £32,000,000. It is true that some of that money was given for purposes other than that to which we attach the greatest importance, viz., religious education. Yes; but is it denied seriously that the great bulk of the money was paid by people who earnestly desired that religious instruction should be given in the schools? That was also the laudable and legitimate desire of the Wesleyans and Roman Catholics in building their schools. But it has been said, "Yes, a great deal of money has been spent on these schools, but they were not properly maintained." It is said that originally those who desired a religious education paid a large proportion of the cost of maintenance, but as time went on they paid a smaller proportion. That is true, and yet it is a fallacious argument. The total cost had so much increased that though relatively they contributed a smaller proportion of the cost, absolutely they gave more year after year. In the case of the Church schools the private contributions towards maintenance amounted to £386,000 in 1871; but in 1902 they amounted to £791,000. It is, therefore, true to say that there was no relaxation of effort on the part of private subscribers, or diminution of the sacrifices they were ready to incur. I have also heard it said that once the Act of 1902 was passed and rate-aid was obtainable the contributions ceased. That is not the case. In the three years that have passed since 1902 the voluntary contributions have increased, and have maintained an average of £1,000,000 sterling per annum in each one of these years. That mere statement of the amount of property involved shows the importance which voluntary subscribers attached to the particular kind of religious instruction they desired to be given to their children.

But the money value of the thing is as dust in the balance by comparison with their right to have the thing if they choose to have it—their right that the State should regard their preference with as favourable an eye as the preference of others of their fellow-subjects who take a different view of the matter. I know that the Government repudiates the idea that in passing this Bill they are seeking to deliver a blow at denominational schools. It is always unnecessary to impute motives. Here we have to deal with facts. If your passion for uniformity, and that alone, carries you to this extreme length, we ask you to curb your passion for uniformity. There was a time when the leaders of Liberal opinion thought that uniformity was not a good but a bad thing. John Stuart Mill was against uniformity in secular education. He said that diversity in education was necessary in order to get the best that could be got out of individual character. He also held that education established and controlled by the State should only be by way of experiment, as an example and stimulus to keep others up to a certain standard of excellence. If hon. Gentlemen opposite will apply these words to religious education they will understand our attitude towards the dual system which has hitherto existed. We did not attack the undenominational schools; but we did believe, and we do believe, that the existence side by side with undenominational religious instruction of definite religious instruction was a stimulus which kept up the standard of religious instructions in board schools, which are now the provided schools. We believe that if you crush out definite religious instruction you imperil the maintenance of any form of religious instruction as part and parcel of the education of the English child. The State was neutral in this matter. The State never put a disability on those who preferred undenominational education. The State, in fact, gave encouragement to them to spend these large sums of money, as under the Sites Act of 1841. It gave grants to meet equivalent grants of private generosity. It instigated those who cared for denominational education to subscribe more and more money, and money was forthcoming in the proportion of three and a half to one. The State, in fact, promoted this form of education at the cost of private persons of religious instincts, in order to relieve the general public and those who were satisfied with undenominational education of charges which otherwise they must have borne. In face of the fact, is it proper to transfer the whole of these schools, and to divert them from the purposes that those who spent those large sums of money intended them to subserve ?

Let me now turn to the method of transfer. By Clause 2 the transfer is to be carried out by arrangement (which is a new word in legislation) between the owners or trustees of the schools and the local bodies in cases where the local body desires to do so, and in cases where it does not desire to do so these schools may cease to be public elementary schools, and the local body may rate all those who have subscribed these large sums of money in order to build two or three schools to compete with the original schools, withdrawing from them all rate-aid and aid from the Exchequer. That is a monstrous proposition. You invite two persons to make a bargain, and you give to one of the parties to the arrangement the power of ruining the other unless he accepts the terms. The local authority says to the trustees of the unprovided schools, "If you do not accept my terms I shall withdraw all public aid from your schools and build two others and rate you for them. Now, what will you take ?" But if even with this wonderful lever which the Government has placed in the hands of the local authority, they do not succeed in making an arrangement; then this anonymous, this novel body, is brought into being; this Commission of three, with powers utterly unknown, is placed above all law. And what a long time the Government is going to give owners and trustees to make this arrangement! If the Bill passes the Commission comes into being on the first of next January. I do not know when the Bill is going to pass. Say it is the end of October or November. In that case they would have to spend their Christmas holiday in making terms with the local authority. This Commission is brought into the machinery for compelling people to surrender their property and to give up their religious convictions in a harsh and unjust manner. But will it work ? The only gleam of satisfaction which I have derived from reading this Bill is the belief that it will not work at all. I do not suppose that any of those who agree with us in politics are going to imitate proceedings which we thought foolish and a dereliction of civic duty—I mean passive resistance; but I do believe that trustees will feel themselves bound as honourable men to defend the suits which are going to be brought against them throughout the length and breadth of the land. It is scarcely left to them as matter of choice. Very little choice is left to anybody under this Bill, unless he be a teacher. Other people have to take what the Government give them ; the teacher alone is left to pick and choose. You compel owners and trustees to defend the suits. There are 14,200 voluntary schools, nearly all of them under trusts. Do you suppose, in default of arrangement before January 1st, 1907, that in twenty or thirty years your Commission, unless you give them all the powers of Oliver Cromwell's military generals, will be able to extract that property from people whom you compel to defend it ?

I come to the first exemption from the iron rule—Clause 3, the ordinary facilities. If the local authority allows it, if the Commission awards it, only in the non-provided schools religious education may be given upon two mornings in the week. The teachers are prohibited by the State from giving it, and the pupils are told by statute that they need not attend. Why, it is a mockery. I will not waste time upon that. Coming to Clause 4, the extraordinary facilities, which are confined to urban districts and to boroughs, there, if the local authority allows it, and the inquiry demonstrates that four-fifths of the parents wish it, the school is to remain more or less a denominational school. I say there is no liberty in any of these exemptions. They do not seriously modify the main rule, which is an iron rule, an unjust and harsh rule. We know pretty well what the effect of the latter exemption may be. Under it, according to a Return, which has been given by my hon. friend, 100 per cent. of the schools of the Jews may be saved, 77 per cent. of the Roman Catholic schools, more than half of the Wesleyan schools, but in the case of the Church of England only one quarter of her schools will be saved. In this matter we are not fighting the battle of any one denomination, and I say that for all denominations the provision is precarious and inadequate. Hon. Members devote a great deal of attention to what they call the attacks on this Bill by Churchmen. I wonder if they read what is sometimes said by those for whose sake this Bill is brought in. I wonder if the Minister for Education read an interesting speech made only a week ago at Torquay by the Rev. F. E. Anthony. Up to 1902 the Rev. F. E. Anthony was chairman of the School Board in Plymouth. Since that time he has been chairman of the Education Committee. On the council there is a Radical majority, and their idea of fair play is to appoint twenty-one Nonconformists and six Conservative Churchmen on the education authority. That is the authority at Plymouth on which all these facilities and exemptions depend; and we know what they mean to do, because Mr. Anthony has told us. He is very dissatisfied with Clauses 3 and 4 of this Bill, but he says fortunately the Government have made both these clauses permissive, and he adds that it will be the duty of the local authority "to use the remedy which the Bill provides.'

Coming to Clause 5, will any sane man believe that people will build schools out of their own money and maintain them on the off-chance that local authorities will at some future day, under no compulsion, take them over and give them the facilities of Clause 4? It is absurd. It is a mockery to put in Clause 5. These exemptions are worthless. The rule remains—unjust in principle and harsh in application to all denominations. There is an added wrong done to the Church, not by the Bill, and not by the Government, but by many ardent supporters of the Bill outside this House and in the Press, who, because we, in common with those who belong to other denominations, state that we attach importance to distinctive religious education being given according to the creed and catechism of our Church, taunt us with attacking the Bible. That is hitting below the belt. I think hon. Members who belong to the Liberal Party have forgotten what liberty of conscience means. It is an infringement of any man's liberty of conscience to ask him to justify to those who differ from him the reasons for any religious faith which he may hold. I am not going to be drawn into expressions of any religious or theological opinion, but I say that in this Bill the teacher, and the teacher alone, is allowed to have full liberty of conscience in matters of religious belief.

In venturing to move the complete rejection of this Bill, I deny that we are showing callousness to the prospect that the Bible might be eliminated altogether from our schools. Who are those champions of simple Bible teaching? They are the supporters of a Bill which provides in respect of simple Bible teaching that the local authority need not sanction it, the teacher need not give it, and that the pupil need not attend to receive it.

Dr. MACNAMARA: What about the Act of 1870?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I will take up that interruption. Hon. Members opposite think that they controvert our argument when they point to the Act of 1870 and the subsequent by-laws instituting the Cowper-Temple clause. On that very ground we have always claimed, and we claim now, that you ought not to destroy the denominational school, because the existence of the denominational school not only gives some measure of justice to those who prefer denominational instruction, but also, in our opinion, gives a stimulus and sets a standard to local authorities who, but for that stimulus and standard, might not, for all we know, give religious teaching in the school. We may be wrong, but that is our view. We stand by the argument that the State has been neutral to each of these two classes, and we say that it ought to continue to be neutral. We say that this miserable provision even for teaching the Bible does imperil the continuous existence of any religious teaching in our schools, and we think that a national danger. We say that the first part of your Bill crushes out denominational teaching, and we think that a social injustice; and when you welcome this or that argument as a system of compromise, when you declare that we are entering into a battle in order that some political profit may be got out of it, I assure you that you are wrong. Let us deal seriously with what is a serious problem. We feel that you have not reached a solution of the religious difficulty in this Bill; we think, indeed, that you have increased it. You are forcing the country into a period of religious war, and we think that no solution can be arrived at which does not recognise the right of the parent to choose the religious education which is to be given to the child. If you do not do that you at once set up an unfair distinction between the opportunities of the rich and the opportunities of the poor in this country. The rich man sends his son to Eton, and his child hears the services of the Church of England, to which he may be attached by many associations, every day of his life. Why, if a poor man wishes that, is he not to have it? In Clause 9 of the Act of 1902 the right of the parent was fully recognised in respect of the future. In respect of the future, schools were to be provided, denominational or undenominational in character, by any who so wished it, subject only to the efficiency of the education and some regard for the economy of the rates. This was a model. If we had proceeded on these lines we might have found that it was possible to make existing institutions give a greater recognition to the right of the parent. But that is not what you are proposing to do. You are telling us that there are practical difficulties in the way of recognising the right of the parent, that the right of entry upsets the reverence of the pupils for the teacher, and that you cannot build new denominational schools. How do you think that Clause 3 is going to work? Throughout 14,000 schools in this country you are going to have the right of entry which you say introduces such difficulties into the maintenance of the school.

MR. BIRRELL: The right which is specifically defined in Clause 3 is that of leaving the teaching of the trust school which is transferred to the local authority.

MR. WYNDHAM: But does the right hon. Gentleman think that in providing this right he is thinking of the right of the parent? He is only thinking of the trust. If that be so, then the battle is more fiercely joined than I thought. Until you have regard for the right of the parent you will never arrive at any peace in the religious strife which you have opened up. If I am told that it is impossible or objectionable to have schools of a particular denominational character, I say that it is the case in Germany in respect of religion. They are supposed to be up-to-date in regard to education. Why then does not the Government imitate them? In respect of language the Austro-Hungarian Empire have provided three schools in every village. The thing is not impracticable if you wish to recognise the right of the parent. But if you say that it is not enough that the State should be neutral, then let the State help by rights of entry everywhere, by building schools in accordance with the wishes of the parent everywhere. We shall not hinder you; we shall help you; but do not for the first time during many decades offer special advantages to those who prefer one kind of religious instruction and inflict special disabilities on those who prefer another kind of religious education. I gather from the interruption of the right hon. Gentleman that he attaches very little importance to the right of the parent. He was thinking more of the kind of vested interest in the school.

MR. BIRRELL: The trust.

MR. WYNDHAM: I believe that there is a division of opinion in the Government on this question of the right of the parent. I know that the Chancellor of the Exchequer once derided it. The right hon. Gentleman said—

"A claim is being put forward (never advanced in 1870) which, as far as I know, is as novel as it is startling in its character.

Lord Salisbury and Cardinal Vaughan have discovered that every English parent has the inalienable right to have his children brought up and taught in the religious faith which the parent himself professes."

Perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer has swayed the councils of the Cabinet, but I will quote another remark as to the right of the parent and the attitude of prelates towards that right which is of greater importance than the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

> "Happily we have it now settled under the hands of the prelates, both of the Roman and Anglican Churches, that it is the natural and inalienable right of every parent to teach his child his own religious opinions, and that it is the duty of the State to allow all children attending elementary schools to be instructed on the school premises in their father's religion irrespective of the question whether such religion is generally believed to be true or false."

I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman recognises the authorship of that quotation. It is initialled "A.B." in a book entitled *Boswell's "Life of Johnson,'* edited by Augustine Birrell. I believe that it has been republished this year as a companion volume to the Bill for which he has made himself responsible to the House. I used to think that he differed from Dr. Johnson's views on these matters, but I now infer that he agrees with him. Dr. Johnson was talking of the magistrate's rule when he said—

> "Sir, the only method by which religious truth can be established is by martyrdom. The magistrate has a right to enforce what he thinks; and he who is conscious of the truth has a right to suffer. I am afraid there is no other way of ascertaining the truth but by persecution on the one hand and enduring it on the other."

This Bill is persecution. We may have to endure the persecution of this Bill, but we will battle against it at every stage, and if the Bill is passed, then throughout this Parliament and in every succeeding Parliament, until some recognition is given of "the natural and inalienable right" of every parent to see that his child receives from the State the religious teaching which his parents claim for it. I do not admit for a moment that the Act of 1902 involved any departure from neutrality as far as the State is concerned. But supposing it did. Is that a reason for going further in the wrong direction? Is that a reason for piling up religious disabilities on men whose religious views are as sacred as those of their fellow-subjects? If you do that, you prefer a Parliamentary conflict which will not be confined to the walls of Parliament; and I can state what will happen in the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Queen's Hall in 1896—

> "It advantage is going to be taken of a special and possibly a transient Parliamentary situation to readjust the arrangement in favour of a particular class of schools (without any compensating equivalent in favour of the public), then I warn those who are responsible that they will have challenged, and that as time goes on they will suffer, reprisals."

I would that the necessity for such a conflict might even now be averted; but if you force it upon us we shall face it without fear in the assured hope of ultimate victory. I beg to move.

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (Sir HENRY FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): In the long, able, and eloquent speech to which we have listened, the right hon. Gentleman has announced in almost every variety of phrase his determination and the determination of those who sit on the opposite Benches to fight this Bill to the end, and to adopt all measures to defeat it. But the right hon. Gentleman has not touched the facts of the case, and he has completely ignored the history of the position in which the House and the country are now placed. He has given us his own views with reference to education and the construction of this Bill, and he has made prophecies as to what the result will be; but we dispute the facts of the case as he has stated them, and from most of his construction of the Bill we most strongly dissent. I was glad that the right hon. Gentleman did not "hit below the belt"; but I think that he has rather done so in some of his previous utterances. I should like to enter a protest against the language which the right hon. Gentleman has used elsewhere, and also against the language which the late Prime Minister has used with reference to this Bill, with reference to its authors, and with reference to their intentions. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down told us a few days ago that this was a tyrannical and iniquitous measure. He described it as one of incredible meanness and as a violation of the canons of eternal justice. Then, passing from prose to poetry—and no one can do it more effectively than the right hon. Gentleman—he said—

> "If this Bill passes, rural England will become a howling wilderness,"

peopled, I suppose, by howling Nonconformists—

> "and the solitudes will re-echo nothing but the determined tramp of the rate collector and the harsh commands of the bureaucrat underling."

We can afford to smile at that, and we know from his speech this afternoon that the right hon. Gentleman's bark is a great deal worse than his bite. But I protest against a statesman of the experience, the high character, and the position of the Leader of the Opposition saying what he has said in the last forty-eight hours with reference to the conduct of the Government—

> "Can you conceive any outrage more atrocious? The Government have the deliberate intention of crushing the Church of England."

I once heard Mr. Disraeli in this House say of a statement made by one of the most eminent statesmen of the day that it was "an impudent fabrication." The Speaker of that day allowed that phrase to pass, but I am not going to repeat it now. I should be the last to use such an offensive word as "impudent."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): Do repeat it.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: No; I have too much respect for the right hon. Gentleman and too much respect for myself to apply such a word to him; but I say his statement was a fabrication, and one without the slightest foundation. The right hon. Gentleman was attacking the personal character and intentions of His Majesty's Government. The right hon. Gentleman used stronger words still. He said of the

> "provisions of the Bill which provide for the clergyman in a rural parish giving religious education on two days in the week, and the provisions which relieve the teacher from giving religious teaching to which he objects—that it was a great atrocity."

Then the right hon. Gentleman went on—

> "It is not uncharitable"—

I should like to hear the right hon. Gentleman's definition of charity—

> "to say that it is not the interests of religion which the Government have at heart, but the desire to crush as far as they can a great Church to which they do not belong."

Hon. Members are quite at liberty to impute to the members of His Majesty's Government [" The Bill"]—No; the right hon. Gentleman was speaking of what the intentions of the Government were, and he had no right to say that the nineteen Gentlemen responsible for the government of this country were animated by motives so dishonourable and discreditable. [Cries of "No."]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman has attributed to me the intention of calumniating the persons composing the Government, because I said that they had the intention of crushing the Church of England. The crushing of the Church of England is a policy I should reprobate in the strongest language; but it does not convey personal discredit. The Liberation Society are not scoundrels, and they exist in order to destroy the Church of England. I attributed to the Government a policy which I thought and still think is embodied in the Bill. If they tell me that they repudiate the intention, as they tell me they do, I will no more attribute it to them. I will only say that their Bill does not carry out what they now say is their intention, and that it does carry out what to all appearances it was aimed at carrying out. The right hon. Gentleman thinks I violated the canons of public controversy by what I said. There is not a man on that side who, in the heat of the general election, has not used far more violent language.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: We will pass away from this personal question. An event has taken place which both the right hon. Gentlemen have completely ignored. There has been an appeal to the country on this question. The two questions which were before the country at the last election with reference to education were public control of public money and the abolition of religious tests, which we have heard described this afternoon as partly an insane proposal and partly an unjust one. Will any one say that those questions were not before the electorate—that there was an election from John o' Groats to the Land's End where they were not raised?

SIR PHILIP MUNTZ (Warwickshire, Tamworth): In my constituency the question was never raised in any form or shape.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: There is no rule without an exception. But there was no man on this side of the House who was not pledged on these questions; and I say that in the heat of that election there were a large number of candidates on the other side of the House, some of whom are here and a great many of whom are not, who again and again intimated that they were dissatisfied with the legislation of 1902 and were in favour of the principle of public control of public money, and opposed to the imposition of tests. I will give one or two authorities as to this point. From a number of organs of public opinion on the Unionist side I will take two. *The Times* of April 10th said—

> "The last shreds of denominational or clerical management are thus swept away, and a great step is taken towards the establishment of one uniform national system. With this it is useless to quarrel. It was probably inevitable, and Mr. Birrell was perhaps right in intimating that as long as the dual system remained we could have neither peace nor progress."

Then the *Standard* of April 9th said—

> "Unionists must reconcile themselves to two very important and very unfortunate reversals of the existing law. In every school that receives assistance from local taxation it is certain, in the first place, that complete popular control will be established—the foundation managers of the voluntary schools will be swept away. Secondly, we may be sure that what are called religious tests for teachers will be abolished. It would be useless in the present state of parties at Westminister to argue that question. Of nine-tenths of the Liberal majority it is said that if their minds were open to conviction on this point they would have no right to be sitting in the House of Commons."

The hon. Member has said that in his constituency they were ignorant of the education question.

SIR PHILIP MUNTZ: I had Nonconformists on my platform who expressed their strong approval of the late Government's Education Bill.

Sir Henry Fowler.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: The hon. Member will admit that the *Birmingham Post* is an authority.

SIR PHILIP MUNTZ: I am not responsible for it.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: It is the great organ of public opinion in Warwickshire, and it said—

> "The Government could not by any possibility avoid giving complete public control to all rate-aided elementary schools and throwing the teaching profession open to all, irrespective of religious belief. Their pledges to the electors and, we think, the verdict given at the polls demanded this as the *minimum*. No one, therefore, can be in the least surprised that the Government has so far modified the Act of 1902 as to bring all non-provided schools under the control of popularly elected bodies and abolished religious tests for teachers employed in those schools. Nor would it be anything but futile to attempt to upset these provisions of the Bill.

Now, I think upon that I am justified in asserting that it was the opinion of the Press. But I have another and a higher authority—Lord St. Aldwyn, so well known in this House as Sir Michael Hicks Beach. He is reported to have said—

> "He had always felt that the maintenance of denominational schools depended largely upon voluntary subscriptions, and that rate aid would kill such subscriptions, as it had done; and that the question would arise whether it was possible to maintain those schools under their separate voluntary management. Rate aid having killed voluntary subscriptions, he was not going to argue that the result of the late general election had not given the present Government fair ground to say that there must be public control over all schools which received rate aid."

That is the real situation in which the Government were placed; and they would have flinched from their duty if they had not proposed to enact the two fundamental principles against which we are asked by the Amendment to vote, and every man who votes for the Amendment will vote against the two fundamental principles of public control over public money and the abolition of religious tests. Now, what is the position? Up to 1870 almost all the education in this country had been the result of voluntary effort inspired by Christian motives. I am not going to undervalue in any degree what the Church of England and other denominations have done for education; it would be unfair and unjust to do so; but we have to keep facts in mind. In 1895 the then Prime Minister avowed the intention of his Government to relieve the intolerable strain of finding the money to keep these voluntary schools afloat. Efforts have been made to prevent the creation of school boards in a large number of parishes. I know that in my own districts Voluntary Schools were supported from the desire to keep out school boards. In fact, it was stated that if you could only give so much money it would avoid a rate. I admit there have been erected since 1870 6,765 voluntary schools, and, so far as I can make out, taking the figures from the Education Department, £4,865,000 has been raised by voluntary subscriptions, and when it is said that it is unfair for one of two parties to an agreement to attempt to destroy the other, let us see what was the agreement of 1870. The position then taken up was this. At that time, when the Bill was brought in, the cost of education in the country was roughly estimated by Mr. Gladstone at 30s. a head, and he said a third was contributed by public grants, a third by parents in fees, and a third was provided by voluntary subscriptions. Mr. Gladstone then made the proposal which formed part of the Government scheme for building grants to encourage the erection of additional voluntary schools, that the third from public money should be made a half, and that the other parties should find the other half. Now, what has happened since then? I have mentioned the intolerable strain, and the right hon. Gentleman has said that subscriptions rose to £600,000 or £700,000; but we are dealing with larger figures. In 1870 the entire cost was only £500,000, and the attendance at the schools was, practically, 1,000,000, and the local rates provided £300,000; but in 1902 the expenditure of public money for elementary education was something like £12,000,000, of which £8,250,000 was in grants and £3,250,000 from rates. I will go somewhat higher than the right hon. Gentleman in regard to voluntary subscriptions. I think they were nearly £900,000, but what of that when there is a grant of £12,000,000 from the public funds? The cost, no doubt, has gone up, and is now, I suppose, £3 a head, and in voluntary schools £2 6s. 8d., but no doubt the hon. Member for North Camberwell will deal with this part of the subject more accurately than I can. And now, what is proposed? We are told it is robbery and confiscation—that is, I believe, the Bishop of Manchester's phrase, and I think it has been adopted this afternoon—and the right hon. Gentleman says we are going to take these schools from them, that we are going to appropriate the money spent in the erection and other objects, and are striking a blow at legal rights consecrated by legislation and administration for 1,000 years. Now, I say at once the proposal is not to take the property; it will remain in the existing ownership. At present the control is, under the Act of 1902, under private management, and we say now that, being publicly supported, the management must be under representative public control. We ask for the user of the schools for five days in the week and for a certain number of hours each day. We do not interfere with them in the evening, and we do not interfere with them no two days, one of which is the most important day of all. What about the Sunday schools? Have the Sunday schools no power in the Church of England? There is not a bishop on the Bench or a clergyman doing his duty who will not admit that his Sunday school is conferring the highest benefit upon his parishioners. Do we stop there? No. We say you have provided these schools, and we will pay rent for the five days' user. And that is confiscation—that is, robbery! In addition, we say we will relieve you from the cost of repairs. You may say the terms are not so liberal as they should be, and there are others who say we are too generous, but it is nonsense to call this confiscation; it is a misuse of the English language; you might as well call it murder or burglary.

That is so far as pounds, shillings, and pence are concerned; and then the right hon. Gentleman attaches supreme importance, and rightly so, to the higher issues—religious education. On two days of the week the education authority is obliged to hand over to the denomination the religious teaching in the schools. That is what the Bill proposes; there are two days upon which the Church or denomination for whom the school was erected are entitled to carry on its religious teaching. It is not optional; it is not subject to the local authority; they will be entitled, if the Act passes, if a parent wishes his child to be so taught, to give religious teaching.

MR. WYNDHAM asked where in the Bill he found they were entitled.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: I am not dealing with theoretic possibilities, but with actual every-day possibilities; it is in Clause 2. You can then have special denominational teaching, with the catechisms and Church formularies, and you will have the right to discontinue the attendance of the children during the other days of the week when another class of instruction is given to which objection is taken. I will give the House a practical illustration. One of the most distinguished clergymen in London wrote to *The Times* this week stating that as a rule the clergy only gave religious instruction on two days in the week. I met, the other day, a friend of mine, the clergyman of a parish where there is only a voluntary school, and I said to him, "What do you do?" He said, "I give my catechism instruction on two days a week." Of course during the rest of the week the teacher gives the religious instruction. But that instruction is not confined to specific formularies; it is general Biblical instruction.

COLONEL WILLIAMS (Dorsetshire, W.): It is given by Church teachers.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Is there any proposal that there should be a discontinuance of Church teachers? [Cries of "Yes."] Nothing of the sort. In every school taken over the right of the voluntary teacher is preserved; his continuance in office is maintained. The words of the clause are—

> "Where a local education authority continue an existing voluntary school under this Act as a school provided by them, any teachers in the school at the time of the transfer shall continue to hold office under the local education authority by the same tenure and on the same terms and conditions so far as they are consistent with the provisions of this Act as before the transfer."

SIR HENRY CRAIK (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): What when they die?

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: The difficulty which the right hon. Gentleman dwelt upon was with reference to the insufficient, inadequate, and unnecessary religion which is taught at the present time in the ordinary board schools. I think he forgot that 1,000,000 children belonging to Church of England parents are at this moment, and have been for many years, trained in the school board schools. Is it to be said that they have had no religious instruction? What is the testimony of the archbishops, bishops, and clergy of the Church of England as to the character and nature of the religious teaching of the board schools? I must in justice make one or two quotations, in order to show that the religious instruction of the board schools is not entitled to be treated with the contempt with which it has been the fashion in the last few days to treat it. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, the Bishop of Durham—I could go through the whole list of bishops and quote the manner in which they have spoken of the efficiency, of the value, and of the high character of the religious teaching in board schools. The Archbishop of Canterbury says—

> "It is almost inconceivable how any Christian man who knows the facts can speak of the religious teaching at present given under the London School Board as 'worthless.' Have all those who speak with ready assurance on the subject really examined the religious syllabus of the London School Board. To declare it to be impossible profitably to convey to the mind of a little child the sacred lessons which Holy Scripture gives in story and precept and psalm and parable, and, above all, in the life and works of our Blessed Lord, unaccompanied for the moment by Church doctrines of a distinctive sort—to declare this is, it seems to me, to contradict the simple experience of a thousand Christian homes. It is to me almost inconceivable how any Christian man who knows the facts can speak of the religious teaching at present given under the London Board as 'worthless,' because it is—to use a sorely battered term—undenominational. . . . It is simply trifling with this grave subject to ignore that such instruction lays the foundation upon which the ampler teaching of the Christian faith can be securely built."

I am not going to undervalue the question of the right of the parent with reference to the education of his children. We propose to have on two days of the week distinctive teaching, and on the other three days to have this education of which the Archbishop of Canterbury speaks so highly; and I think that that is as complete and satisfactory a system of religious education as at all events in the Reform Churches can be required.

The right hon. Member for West Birmingham has made statements on this subject within the last two or three days in letters and in speeches—it appears to have rather a fascination for him—with reference to what are the central proposals, as he regards them, of the Government. He says we are proposing to endow a new religion with a million of money. I think it would be impossible to put in any one sentence consisting of that number of words two more transparent and almost, so far as he is concerned, impossible facts. "A new religion!" We heard what the Archbishop of Canterbury has said. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has ever read the syllabus of the Birmingham School Board——

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): Yes.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: And whether he remembers the Birmingham School Board controversy in 1903, when the present Bishop of Manchester, who took an active, and I believe a very valuable, part, in reference to this syllabus, said—

> "He confessed that the cry of the impossibility of undenominational teaching amazed him. . . . There was no book in the world which was so true to the point of the heart's compass as the Bible. Men who read that book differently, but read it sincerely, still found that was the effect it produced upon them, and that was the effect they desired to see produced on the children, and whatever a teacher could do to enhance that effect without sectarian bias they would give him liberty to do."

Yet that same bishop said within the last few days of this mode of undenominational education that "it would imperil the Christian faith." I have great faith in popularly elected and popularly controlled authorities. I do not find the majority of Englishmen are in the habit of doing an unfair or unjust thing, and I do not believe they will do it. I do not believe the majority of English parents or the majority of English voters are going to exclude religious teaching from English schools. I know that a proposition was made to do it in this House in 1870, and I know that the division which took place in this House then was 420 against purely secular education and sixty for. But when it came to deal with it in the concrete form of the Cowper-Temple clause, Mr. Disraeli made a very ingenious and a very powerful speech against it, and he predicted in almost the same language as the right hon. Gentleman to-day the calamities which would follow from this non-denominational teaching. He predicted sectarian controversy if this question was left open. There has been no controversy from that day to this. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"] No; not with reference to the religious teaching in board schools. I repeat that the board school system has met with the approval of the bulk of the people of this country. It was, I think, Archbishop Tait who said at Croydon that the school board system had solved the religious difficulty. Of course, you can get up controversy by machinery with which we are all familiar; but what I would ask is, how many board schools have discontinued this system? Ten years ago a Return was granted in the House of Lords with reference to the extent to which this school board system, this "new religion," had been adopted in the schools of England by the popularly elected authorities, and there were at that time only seven school boards that did not have religious teaching. These seven school boards were of a very limited character, for the entire number of children under them was something like 8,200 out of a total of 2,250,000.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): I am sorry to intervene for a moment. I know of one School Board with over 8,000 children where no religious instruction is given.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: I daresay. I said there were seven.

MR. CARLILE: But I know of one which alone has 8,000 children. [AN HON. MEMBER: What is the name of it?] The borough of Huddersfield.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: I am only quoting the official Return of ten years ago. But supposing the statement of the hon. Gentleman to be true, what is that out of 2,250,000 millions of children? The right hon. Gentleman attached great importance to the endowed schools. That is a question for the Committee stage of the Bill. My belief—it may be ill-grounded—is that there is a large amount of money applied, and applied unsatisfactorily, to endowed schools which ought to be applied to elementary education. I understand that that opinion has a considerable amount of support from educational authorities. But nothing is intended of an unjust or unfair character with reference to endowed schools. This is an attempt, it may be a bad attempt, to take an opportunity of carrying out more fully what was the intention of the machinery of the Endowed Schools Act, and I am not now going to say one word more about it one way or the other.

But with reference to the Commission, which the right hon. Gentleman described as an anonymous triumvirate placed above the law, who, if a trustee would not betray his trust, might seize the property and divert it in a way which the trust was drawn up to prevent: has the right hon. Gentleman read that clause ?

MR. WYNDHAM was understood to say the names were not in the clause.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Yes, but my right hon. friend said the names would be put in before the Bill passed, and that a Judge would be one of the three; and the right hon. Gentleman opposite did not tell the House that they would be bound to administer the trusts according to the law of the land and the decisions of the Courts of Chancery. This Commission is intended to facilitate and to cheapen the expense of settlements. This imputation to them of the wicked offence of departing from the ordinary courts of justice to expedite matters was advanced by one who was a distinguished member of a Conservative Government which passed the Scottish Church Bill two years ago, when issues affecting millions of property held on religious trusts were referred to the final decision of a Commission presided over by the Secretary of State for the Colonies; and Scotland approved of what was done, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London defended it in the House and used arguments in its favour in which the then Opposition concurred. Is that to be denounced as dishonourable and unjust in one case which is allowed in another ? I have no doubt there are many points in this Bill which will be the subject of great controversy in Committee. That I am quite prepared for; and I have no doubt that there will be a very frank use of all the forms of the House with reference to it. I am quite aware that in a controversy of this sort neither side can have all their own way. I think the great blunder the Leader of the Opposition made in 1902 was that he would not listen to compromise. It should be within the right hon. Gentleman's memory that shortly before we adjourned for the autumn recess I besought him not to press that clause which involved giving a majority to the managers of the denomination to which the schools belonged. I told him—and I did not speak without some knowledge of the case—that thoughtful, reasonable men on both sides were endeavouring to arrive at a solution. I said if he would give us the six weeks' holiday something might be agreed upon which would avoid what has arisen since. He said "No." He was determined to go on; and I ventured to say that was a declaration of war against Nonconformists. There has been a war. I do not want to have a repetition of that. [Ironical OPPOSITION cheers and counter MINISTERIAL cheers.] An hon. Member says we will have it. Well, if you mean war *à outrance* you can have it. If it requires two to make peace, two are also involved in a war if a war is declared. I think it would be a pitiable thing if the statesmanship of this House came to this subject without something of a different temper than we have seen up to the present time. I have said before, and I say it still, that the majority of the people of this country are just and fair. I deny in the strongest language that my colleagues are animated by any personal motive hostile to the Church of England. Why, the majority of the Cabinet are members of the Church of England. If only men apply their common sense to this matter, they will see that what you impute to us is not only that we are rogues, but that we are fools, and that is a combination which no man likes to have imputed to him.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: A respectable man may desire to destroy the Church of England. He may be very foolish and yet respectable.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: The charge is, and I do not think it is a just one, that we are producing this legislation, not in the interests of religion, not in the interests of education, but with no other but the base, mean motive of destroying the Church of England. That I repudiate in the strongest language I can command. I am willing to forget these personal attacks, for this is not a pleasant controversy for either Churchmen or Nonconformists. It is not a pleasant struggle for public men to be engaged in. It is a controversy in which we ought to be influenced by higher motives than Party triumph. As you know, as you have admitted, as your leaders have declared, including the noble Lord who will have some influence in another place when that question comes up there, the people of this country have decided this matter. They have decided in favour of two fundamental principles. From these two fundamental principles they will not depart; and I think if these are carried —and I believe the Second Reading of this Bill will be carried, even in the teeth of this uncompromising opposition, with these two great principles—I do not believe the resources of British statesmanship or the charity of British Christianity is so far exhausted that we cannot arrive at something fair and just to all sections of the House, whether they sit on this side or on that. I hope and I believe that this will be the distinguishing characteristic of our legislation on this question.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I recognise the excellence of the concluding remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, and I join with him sincerely in the wish that by the wise direction of the Government on this question this controversy may end satisfactorily. I know that there is something of a difficulty and responsibility which has fallen upon me in the discharge of the duty which I have undertaken, and therefore, I hope to receive the indulgence of the House. This is a measure which, especially for the people on whose behalf I speak, deals with their most profound convictions, their very fervent and sometimes with more than their fervent emotions. I wish to address the House in no spirit of partisanship as between the two great Parties into which this House is divided; and I hope in the observations which I have to make I shall state clearly the case of those in whose behalf I have to speak. At the same time I wish to avoid using any word which will hurt the legitimate susceptibilities of hon. Gentlemen on either side of the House or below the gangways. In fact I cannot do better in my observations than follow the example of the Archbishop of Westminster in the speech which he made in the very remarkable gathering in this City on Saturday last—

"The object of this gathering,"

said the Archbishop,

"is not to attack, still less to denounce those who wittingly or unwittingly are the cause of the present great anxiety . . . . Our concern on this occasion, I wish it to be well understood, is solely for the safety of our Catholic Schools. And it is in behalf of these Catholic Schools, and in their behalf only, that I speak here this afternoon."

Now, I hope that the Minister of Education, and the House generally, will realise the amount of attention, excitement, and profound apprehension which this measure has excited in the minds of the Catholic people of this country. I have had a long and intimate association with my fellow countrymen in England; and I venture to say that never, in the course of the twenty-six years during which I have been associated with them familiarly, have I known their feelings to be so deeply stirred as they are at the present moment in reference to this Bill. Now, why are the Catholic people of this country so deeply disturbed? The Archbishop of Westminster very properly indicates that it is not for him to say whether the injury or the peril which this Bill involves to the schools of the Catholic children is wittingly or unwittingly inflicted. Nor am I entitled to deal with the speeches by which this Bill has been defended, notably by the speeches of the Minister of Education. What I have to deal with is the Bill itself as it stands. The feeling of the Catholic people of this country is that the Bill threatens to extinguish the Catholic character of their schools. It is no answer to these apprehensions to say that even if the Catholic character of the schools were destroyed, the children would get a good secular education. The Catholic people of this country and all over the world would not be parties to sacrificing the religious character of the teaching in their schools. Still less is it an answer to them to say that if their schools were deprived of the Catholic character which they at present enjoy, its place would be taken by simple Bible teaching or by teaching of an undenominational character. I listened with attention and considerable assent to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton in reference to the character and amount of the religious education given in the former school board schools. I can confirm one of his statements. He challenged the right hon. Member for West Birmingham as to whether he had read the religious syllabus of the Birmingham education authority. I have read the syllabus of the education authority of the city a Division of which I have the honour to represent. That syllabus covers twenty-two pages and I am quite willing to accept the criticism which the right hon. Gentleman would pass upon such a syllabus. It would not be too much to say that a large amount of religious instruction would be given under such a syllabus. But with regard to this denominational system our position is entirely different from that of hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House and from that of hon. Gentlemen above the gangway on this side of the House. On the Ministerial side of the House hon. Gentlemen say that denominational teaching is adequate and on the Opposition side it is contended that it is inadequate. Our contention is that it is hostile to us, and the more admirable it is the more hostile it is; and, therefore, every argument advanced in favour of it is one against it. I cannot better give our contention as to that part of the case than in the words of a Memorial I received from a very ancient and representative Catholic body in the town of Preston. Preston has a considerable Catholic population, and it has built many schools and has spent £17,000 or £18,000 upon one school alone. This body which was the first charitable Catholic society founded in Preston in 1701 sent me this Memorial, and it runs—

> "We cannot accept what is quite simple Bible teaching; not merely is this instruction imperfect in the sense in which it is offered to us, but it is often actively and fundamentally hostile to the Catholic ideal. It embodies the principle of the right of private judgment by each individual to interpret the Bible for himself, and it makes the Bible the supreme and sole source of religious authority. To attempt to enforce this upon Catholic children would be nothing short of religious persecution."

There is another body in this country to which our case has an extraordinary analogy, and that is the Jews. The other day a deputation was received by the Minister of Education from an influential body of Jewish gentlemen. The Memorial presented to the Minister for Education contained these words—

> "They pointed out that it was extremely difficult to provide undenominational religious teaching which could be taught to Jews and non-Jews alike, and it would be impossible for the Jews to accept any syllabus which incorporated Christian teaching of any kind."

That represents another position than that of the Jews. Any syllabus of the kind mentioned which you may fashion is hostile to us. The Memorial also sets out that—

> "We are of opinion that, inasmuch as the Jewish schools were founded for the purpose of imparting Jewish instruction to Jewish children, they should be maintained for that purpose, and that Hebrew and Yiddish teaching should be given by Jewish teachers, and that a portion of the managers should be of the Jewish faith."

It is a fact that in the East End of London and in other parts of the country under the existing law Jewish teachers and Jewish teaching and an entirely Jewish atmosphere have been given to schools both voluntary and, what was more remarkable, provided schools. I happen to have read some of the comments which the speech of the Minister for Education elicited. I did not read the hon. Gentleman's speech, but I understand that some people are under the impression that if a Jewish teacher be given to a Jewish school, or a Catholic teacher is given to a Catholic school, something novel and revolutionary is going to be introduced into our legislation. As a matter of fact, however, for years in the provided schools of the Jews in the East End of London there has been Jewish teaching, there has been a Jewish teacher, and instruction is given in Yiddish and Hebrew. The fact remains that in the Jewish schools in the East End of London there is provided by the authorities Jewish teachers and teaching. That is right and I approve of it. I think any other way of dealing with the Jewish schools would be intolerant and intolerable, and am I not entitled to say that a great Christian religion like the Catholic religion ought to be given the same rights which are justly and generously accorded to the children of the Jewish community? In other respects I claim a close analogy between the Jewish and the Catholic schools. We represent a minority as they do, and we represent a poor minority; but the fact upon which I will lay stress is that our schools are homogeneous in that the majority of the children are of one creed. Moreover our schools are not, any more than their schools are, the schools of proselytism, persecution, or ascendancy. I therefore claim for our schools the same rights as theirs.

In the first place I deal with this clause for the limitation to 5,000 people. I think I am right in saying that the right hon. Gentleman calculated that that clause would exclude about 100 Catholic schools, but as a matter of fact 243 schools are in rural districts. I understand, of course, that there is a distinction made between the rural schools and the urban schools. In some respects it is right and necessary that that should be so. In the town people have so many schools, but in many parts of the country there is only one school, where the religion of one creed is taught. But let me point out some hardships which this limitation would involve. I heard the other day of a school in which there were 340 children. This is one that would come into the case of the 5,000 limit. Of that number 300 were Catholics and forty were Protestants. It would be a monstrous thing that the minority of forty should have the right to deprive the 300 of the right to special religious teaching.

But there are other points in Clause 4, the main clause as it affects us, to which I must call attention. It is known to everybody that the Catholic schools of this country have Protestant children amongst their pupils. I do not say this is a reason of complaint. We are bound by law, and bound by good feeling, to open our schools to these children; but we do not invite them; we do not entice them, and when they get there we do not proselytise them. I say our generosity and tolerance in this respect should not be used against us to take away the rights of the majority of Catholic children in favour of the rights of a minority of Protestant children. Another objection I have to the Bill is this—I am not going very closely into a criticism of this Bill, but there is one danger which anybody who knows the character of our population in this country will readily appreciate. Our population to a large extent is a shifting population. That is one of the marks and tokens of its position as a poor population. It is shifting because it has to follow its work. We have seen how in some cases many houses have had to be demolished because our people have had to go to Bootle or somewhere else to follow their work, and also because of their insanitary condition. It is evident that this four-fifths proportion may sometimes be destroyed by a fact which is not to the discredit of the Irish population. It is possible that these schools may be invaded, and that in a moment of extreme religious excitement advantage may be taken of a sudden invasion of the school by children of another faith to destroy its Catholic character. My main objection to the proposal of the Government is that what we regard as the fundamental right, the liberty of conscience, is placed at the mercy of the local authorities of the country. If, as I hold, that is a fundamental liberty, it ought to be bestowed by no smaller power than this Imperial Parliament, and it ought to be guarded by no less firm security than the statute law. I have the *obiter dictum* of the right hon. Gentleman—perhaps I could quote two *obiter dicta.* In his opening speech he spoke of the generosity, equitableness, and broad-mindedness of the local authorities of this country. I accept the general statement, and I accept it particularly with regard to my own constituency of Liverpool. There was another *obiter dictum* in which he said that under Clause 4 there was a loophole for pig-headed obstinacy, denominational bigotry and jealousy. That is our case. Will anybody deny that if we liked we could give cases in the last few years of this pig-headed obstinacy, denominational bigotry, and jealousy on the part of the local authorities of this country? I am not going into that question, I am not going to open the door for a controversial discussion which I am most anxious as far as possible to avoid. I hope that the House will take it from me that in the Committee stage, if our views are contested, I will be able to prove that many local authorities have treated Catholic schools in a far from liberal or generous or friendly spirit, and I hold that it is unwise on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to ask us, in the face of that experience, or even without that, to place the Catholic character of our schools at the mercy of the local authorities of this country unguaranteed by anything less than by statute.

Furthermore I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, Is his method the best for carrying out his own policy? I take the concluding words of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster who has just ingeminated peace. He ingeminated peace as the only way to secure religious equality. I ingeminate peace. I want this controversy to end, and to end in securing religious liberty. But will contested local elections, with the education question as the supreme issue, secure this end? Why, during the last four or five years there has not been a single election in this country in which the people were aroused in which education was not the first and supreme issue upon which they gave their votes. In every municipal election in this country that has been the issue upon which our people have acted, and I want to put it to the House whether it makes for religious liberty that at every municipal election in the country you should have religious parties voting on religious questions instead of devoting themselves to the health of the people, which ought to be the main issue. The House should realise what this question means to the Catholics of this country. The Catholics of this country are English Catholics as well as Irish Catholics, and we mean to make our fight together, both English and Irish. But it is no secret to the House—I am making no extravagant claim when I ask the House to agree that the vast majority of the Catholics of this country are Irish—that this is largely an Irish question, which must be felt and realised from the Irish historical standpoint. I do not mean to go into the past history of Ireland; I will describe the Irish historical position as being this, that the Irish people, and the charity of the Catholic people of Ireland at least, have, over and over again, sacrificed their material interest in the interests of their religious convictions. They are intelligent and quick; in many countries outside this they are the leaders of political life; in this and other countries they are the ornaments of the learned professions, and yet, for years, on account of religion, they were excluded from sharing in professional life. The Irish land question has passed into a problem. There is not a sod of the millions of Irish acres the ownership of which has not been three times surrendered by the Irish people because of their religious convictions. The Irish schools in this country date from the year 1845. That was the year in which our people migrated to this country. Our people came here flying from starvation and pestilence. Those who came to this country did not come from choice. I do not wish to say anything that might be used to cause ill-feeling, but I must say that they came to this country because they could not go to the United States, and they could not go to the United States because they had not the three or four pounds that would take them in the hold of a sailing vessel. But they had the three or four shillings that enabled them to come amongst the cattle on the decks of the boats to this country. In my own constituency of Liverpool the Irish people gathered in the largest numbers in that disastrous time; 26,000 of them landed in the February of 1847, and soon afterwards 13,000 odd of them were in the receipt of relief; they brought no money with them, no education in their heads, no training even of their hands. Some of them brought not only hunger but fever, and I could quote a notable passage from Carlyle on the subject which is well known to many. These were the circumstances under which the great migration into this country took place; and what did this poor people do? They gave out of their poverty the money by which were built side by side the chapel and the Catholic schools, and I tell the Ministry this. They do not realise at all the feeling upon this question if they do not realise the fact that to the Irish Catholic his school is as dear to him as his chapel. These are the men and women who built the Catholic schools of this country. Am I not entitled to ask, therefore, that these schools shall be spared and reserved? Is it not a claim that I can make to this assembly with confidence? It is a claim of a minority, in face of a vast and overwhelming majority of people of other creeds; it is the claim of a people who, while guarding their own liberties, never violated the liberties of others; it is a claim inspired by genuine faith, sanctified by sacrifice unprofane by ascendancy, and I confidently leave it before the conscience and judgment of this House.

*MR. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth): I do not propose to follow the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool into the interesting sketch which he has given of the Irish historic position. It is sometimes thought, and perhaps more frequently said, that the English Nonconformists have a standing feud with the Catholic Party. I do not know whether the hon. Member believes me or not when I say that so far as I am personally concerned I have never entertained the slightest animosity to my Roman Catholic fellow-citizens. I do not believe in their creed, and they do not accept mine. But I never forget that in many, and some perhaps of the most important principles of the Christian faith, the Catholics and the Methodists are absolutely one. I hope, I do not know whether rightly or wrongly, the day may possibly come when under happier auspices these religious differences may to some extent have been set aside, and we may even see the accomplished Leader of the Irish Party in this House, the hon. Member for Waterford, rising to thank the English Nonconformists as Mr. O'Connell did in 1829. In 1829 Mr. O'Connell appeared on the platform of the Protestant Society in London and thanked the English Nonconformists. I will quote his words, as they have been sometimes challenged—

> "I have come here as the representative, not of the intellect, of that I am incapable, but of the warm-hearted feeling of the people of Ireland. I stand here to-day with my country to express our gratitude in feeble but sincere language, for the exertions made on our behalf by our Protestant dissenting brethren."

I do not know whether that happy day may ever come again when Nonconformists and Catholics may stand upon the same platform and describe one another as brethren; but I would venture to say that the Catholic case as presented by the hon. Member a moment ago seemed to me somewhat more moderate than that presented by the acknowledged and authorised organ of that great religious community in this country, because I observe that the *Tablet* on Saturday said—

> "The Government knows by this time that the irreconcilable minimum of our demands is that there shall be Catholic teachers all the time, with liberty to give Catholic instruction under Catholic control, to the children of Catholic parents."

They do not go on to say what I presume is inferred, that that education is to be given at the public cost. Till that is conceded, they say—

> "They may cry "peace, peace,' and there shall be no peace."

And they preface that remark by saying that the resolutions of the Catholic bishops, supplementing those of the Education Council, have fairly committed the Catholics of the United Kingdom to a trial of strength with the Liberal Government. Already Clause 4, to which I will refer in a few moments, granting special facilities for religious education, seems to me to have gone beyond the length of justice and of reason. And if this demand really represents the minimum of the requirements of the Catholic Church, I hardly see myself how it is possible to meet that claim.

May I say, passing from the Roman Catholic claims to which I make no further reference, that I am one of the last persons to entertain against the Church of England any animosity or hatred. I think that is the phrase used by the Leader of the Opposition on more than one occasion when he has referred to the views of the persons whom he describes as the political dissenter. I was myself trained in an Anglican atmosphere. At the college where I was no less than five Anglican Churchmen were responsible for my education. One was a dean, two were canons, and the others were clergymen of some distinction in the Anglican Church. Not a single layman assisted in such education as I obtained. Every morning for three years I was compelled to listen to the Anglican Liturgy. I was one of two or three Dissenters, and I received a large number of ponderous and elegantly bound volumes for winning the college Divinity prize. I passed through that ordeal without, I think, the smell of fire upon me I am sure that my Noncomformist opinions were never in the slightest degree jeopardised by that strange association which for three years I had; and I may venture to urge the Irish Party not to be afraid of associating with those who have different ideals of Christianity, and belong to different sections of the Church of Christ. I hope that the time will come when that enlightened policy which has been pursued in connection with the English universities by the Catholic authorities will be extended by the responsible authorities of their Church right down to the elementary schools in this country. I may remind the Irish Members in this House that one of their most eloquent, and one of their most accomplished colleagues, not now a Member of this House—I refer to Mr. Michael Davitt—was educated in a Wesleyan day school in Lancashire, and so far as I know, he did not suffer in the slightest degree from it. The Leader of the Opposition has spoken in a very derogatory way of what he calls the political Nonconformists, and has said that he always draws in his own mind a sharp distinction between them and the spiritual or religious Noncomformists. I am not going into that nice distinction. I believe it to be wholly visionary and more suitable for the island of Laputa to which he referred on Saturday, than for the common-sense regions in which we dwell. But the Bill is from our point of view a necessary Bill, and a moderate and reasonable Bill. It is not like the Government Bill of 1902. At the general election of 1900 who imagined for a moment that the men sent to Parliament were going to vote for the destruction of the School Board system? Here there has been no such ambiguity. The Leader of the Opposition said that children liked things clearly and precisely stated. So do grown-up people, and no issue has ever been put before the country with greater clearness and with greater precision than has the claim made by a vast section of the English people for public control, and for the abolition of the sectarian tests imposed upon teachers. This policy was foreshadowed and suggested by nearly every great religious organisation in this country other than that of the Anglican Church—by nearly every important educational organisation, and in its main issue by the leading Labour organisations. We are told that the Free Churches of this country are not entitled to claim the right of guiding public opinion. Why are they denied this right? They are in close touch with the working-classes of this country, they are popularly elected organisations capable of feeling the pulse of the country, and they have never put their power into the scale against popular liberty. These are some of the claims which the Free Churches put forward when they urge the Government to amend the unjust, unworkable, and costly legislation of 1902. In what way does the present Bill carry out our plans and our suggestions? It was a very favorite assertion of the Leader of the Opposition—an assertion never proved—that his Bill had improved the position of Nonconformists. I have no doubt he thought so, but I have never met a Nonconformist who was of his opinion, and we claim the right to exercise our own judgment in that respect. All though the great county and diocese of Lincoln there is hardly a single case where one Nonconformist since the passing of the Act of 1902 has been appointed on the management of a voluntary school. The diocesan syllabus of High Church instruction is given in all the non-provided schools, large and small, although there is a large proportion of Nonconformists attending them. It is not right to expect that the Nonconformists of that great county should sit down quietly and accept the Act of 1902 as a solution of the difficulty. Indeed the diocesan inspector of that county has candidly admitted that they took advantage of the presence of Methodist children in those schools for the purpose of embracing them in the folds of the Anglican Church. Canon Pennington, writing in 1897, said—

> "Our syllabus is always arranged so as to give distinctive denominational instruction. I always saw it was given when I was diocesan inspector, and always asked the children, chiefly the children of Nonconformist parents, questions bearing upon it. This is the case throughout Lincolnshire. Thus, in fact, we are training the children of Nonconformists to be children of the Church."

Nonconformists were determined to put an end at the earliest possible moment to the using of these Anglican schools for the purpose of alienating the children of Nonconformists from the faith of their fathers. But we sometimes argue upon this question as though nothing had taken place in the march of educational reform and progress during the last generation or two. There was a time when perhaps the parson might have been accepted as a satisfactory teacher even for secular education. That day has completely gone. The parson in the old days might have been able to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the elements of knowledge, but he is totally unfitted to perform the duties of a secular teacher to-day. That is the whole trend of educational experience in every country in the world.

There is another thing which makes us most suspicious—antagonistic if you like—to the religious instruction given in these Church of England schools. The Church of England herself has completely altered. The Church of England is rapidly approximating in doctrine, creed, and ritual to the principles of the Roman Catholic Church. That is one strong reason why Nonconformists fought the last election with an intensity and earnestness never before exhibited in this country—to secure a Government that would make one of its first objects the reversal of the unfortunate legislation of 1902. I admit perfectly that the political dissenter—if you choose so to describe him—took the field. There are many men sitting on the Ministerial side of this House who would not have left their occupations, their municipal work, and their various social engagements, to seek a place in Parliament had it not been for the very distinct and special object of carrying this Bill upon which we are now engaged.

Has this Bill met our reasonable demands? We asked for one type of schools under absolute popular control. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has pointed out how futile and absurd was the opinion that in those little village boards of management with a majority of four to two there was any effective popular control, and even now under the distant county council there cannot be in my judgment a rational popular control. We desire education authorities in smaller areas where a knowledge of the local interests and of the locality, and the assistance of women on boards of school management in the work of elementary education, can be enlisted. It is impossible in a county like Lincoln for multitudes of people, otherwise fit, to spend a whole day for the purpose of sitting on the county council as the education authority, and while a very important step has been taken by the unification of of the schools and placing them under popular control, in my judgment that control will not be effective until greater use is made of those smaller school areas. I observe that the power of appointing teachers is reserved for the central authority. I am not sure that that might not be modified by conferring such a power upon these local and smaller school areas. With regard to the teachers, I have the figures of a very large number of schools within twenty miles of the central town of my division, and I cannot find a single case where a Nonconformist teacher has been appointed under the Act of 1902, even in the lower grades of these various schools. It is only bare justice to the teachers in our schools that they should be exempted from those most humiliating extraneous duties which were often indirectly forced upon them, and they should be recognised as Civil Servants of the State. Reference has been made to the training colleges. I trust that steps may be taken to place all denominational training colleges in receipt of State aid under some sort of public control, and that the tests imposed upon students at our training colleges may be removed. In reply to those who are so afraid of the influence of the teachers I may remind the House that 70 per cent. of the teachers in the School Board schools have been educated in the strict preserves of the training colleges of the Anglican Church. If hon. Members will read a number of letters which have appeared in that well known Church of England newspaper, the *Layman*, they will find in letters from twelve or fourteen experienced teachers in school board schools most valuable evidence of the religious influence exerted in those schools by teachers who have been trained in the training colleges of the Anglican Church. So far as popular control and the abolition of ecclesiastical tests are concerned, everybody until quite recently appeared to be agreed. My right hon. friend the Member for Wolverhampton has quoted *The Times* newspaper and the *Standard* newspaper, and what they state is only typical of every journal which has dealt with this subject. I know there was a little quarrel between the *Birmingham Post* and the *Yorkshire Post* as to whether the former journal had quite accurately stated the cause of the defeat of the Unionist Party at the last election. The former paper said it was the Education Act of 1902, the latter said it was tariff reform. Now the religious difficulty comes upon the field, and it is the most troublesome and contentious subject with which we have to deal. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in one of his letters says that there are only two alternatives, the first being a secular system, a purely secular system, with outside facilities——

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Member has not quoted me *verbatim*. I never called the system secular, but what I suggested does involve an entire separation between religious and secular instruction. That can hardly be called a secular system.

*MR. PERKS: I understand that the right hon. Gentleman suggests only two plans, but I am going to suggest a third, and I think it is the best of the three—at any rate it is the one which the Government has accepted. I will take the first. Supposing we say that the school in regular hours is to deal with only secular subjects. I imagine that excludes Bible reading, and consequently Bible exposition. The right hon. Gentleman suggests that facilities should be given outside school hours, but upon the school premises, for the various religious denominations if they want to give their special doctrinal instruction. That is a perfectly intelligible and clear plan, which is supported by a very considerable amount of opinion in this country, but it has to contend with this great and insuperable difficulty, namely, that it turns the Bible out of the elementary schools of England. That is against English sentiment and opposed to the wishes of a huge and preponderating section of British opinion. Therefore, I think that may be brushed aside as not being a practical policy. Now what is the policy which is proposed as an alternative? It is this. Let every religious denomination come into the school for the purpose of explaining and impressing upon the children the various religious views which they hold. That theory has been smashed into atoms from a practical standpoint by one of the most accomplished educationalists that was ever at the Education Department, namely, Sir J. Fitch. It involves an inquiry into the religious opinions of the children in the schools. Someone would have to go round to take a sort of religious census in order to ascertain the opinions of the parents of some 500 or 1,000 children attending a school. That would have been the first difficulty confronting the managers. Having ascertained the religious opinions of the parents they were to be divided into about ten, twelve, or even twenty sects. They would have to be penned off in different little rooms at times suitable for their instruction; and that is the second difficulty. The third difficulty is who is to teach them? It is impossible to impose this duty upon the headmaster or the headmistress who may not be acquainted with the views of the parents or the requirements of the children. I think upon one occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham spoke of the Wesleyan religion. I may point out that there is no such thing as the Wesleyan religion.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have not made any speech on this subject lately. I know I referred incidentally to it in a speech the other day.

*MR. PERKS: I know that the right hon. Gentleman has been recently engaged in dealing with more important subjects, but I remember the right hon. Gentleman using in 1902 the expression which seemed to me to be a very extraordinary one, and one, which at all events, shows great ignorance of the Wesleyan Church, its creeds and its practices. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham with his great experience of Nonconformity is in such a state of blissful ignorance, what must be the state of the average village teacher upon this subject? The first objection is that the scheme necessitates an inquiry into the opinions of the parent, the second that it pens off the children into a number of little ecclesiastical folds, and the third that it requires an inquiry into the theological opinions of the staff and involves the admission of various clergy. It increases what I think every citizen and every patriot and every Christian man must desire to decrease—it increases, instead of removes, strife of a religious nature amongst the children of our homes and of our people. That is the second suggestion in the right hon. Gentleman's letter. But the Government has adopted another plan. The Government has fallen back upon the well-tried experience of the various school boards of this country, and it has adopted a scheme in this Bill, which I believe is reasonable, workable and practical, and also a popular one based upon the experience of our great school boards and upon the popular judgment of the electors of this country. The Bill provides for simple Bible teaching. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] The Government unquestionably gives authority to the local education authority to continue what has been done by all the great school boards with hardly a single exception. The school board system is a simple Bible system. As the President of the Board of Education has said, the Bible stands at the very base of school board instruction in this country. I very well remember one of the Articles of the Anglican Church, which I have not looked at for more than thirty years—I believe it is Article 6—and it lays down the doctrine that the holy Scriptures are at the basis of the Religious Faith of the Church of England. What has been the reception of Clause 3, and what is that clause? It is anathematised by almost everybody. The Bishop of London goes so far as to say—

> "Religious instruction under this provision will be given of the kind which the board schools were built to avoid."

That is certainly a most extraordinary statement for any bishop of the Anglican Church to make. We are told that there cannot be such a thing as fundamental religious instruction. A late Member of this House, Lord Hugh Cecil, said—

> "It imposes a system of education which at the best tends to undermine Christianity."

That is a position which it is almost impossible for any Nonconformist to assent to. Then there is the contrary opinion held by Canon Henson. Preaching at Westminster on April 9th, Canon Henson said—

> "Schools erected before the Education Act were mostly erected on the broad understanding that the principles of the established Church were those of all Protestants. The schools erected since the passing of the Education Act were erected under legal compulsion and were, in point of fact, a cheap alternative for rate-built and rate-supported schools."

The same authority says—

> "The Church of England ought to constitute itself the champion and the exponent of that fundamental Christianity which was common to Protestants, and alone commended itself to the general acceptance of the English nation."

What does Clause 3 do for denominationalism—for the Church of England, the Wesleyans, the Roman Catholics, and other denominations who own sectarian schools? I have known many a time, in the course of my business experience, propositions put before great commercial undertakings for grants in towns like Crewe, Rugby, York, and many other places. I could name applications which have been made by Church of England school managers for grants for schools for the purpose of avoiding school board rates on railways and other commercial institutions. It is a fallacy to suppose that the money given to all these schools has been given for the purpose of advancing the religious tenets of the communities to which they belong. The clause puts the whole cost of maintaining these schools on the local authority. The ratepayer or taxpayer thereby makes a considerable grant to the denomination. In the next place it gives them the use of these schools on week evenings and, as my right hon. friend has said, on Saturday and Sunday. There are 7,000,000 children in the Sunday schools of England; their instruction will go on, on Sunday, in these buildings, which in the case of the Church of England will be paid for by the State. It gives them also rent. Now what is the rent going to be? From figures which I have roughly taken out it would appear that the Church of England will receive in the shape of rent, if her schools are transferred to the public authorities, upwards of £500,000 per annum, the Wesleyan Church upwards of £20,000, the Roman Catholic Church upwards of £40,000, and the other denominations and the British schools upwards of £20,000. These are all endowments for the benefit of these religious communities for handing over their buildings on several days of the week for the purpose of secular instruction. Furthermore, it affords the opportunity for religious instruction to be given. On two days of the week special religious instruction can be given. That clause will probably not be availed of by some of the great Nonconformist churches in the country. They are content with the Bible instruction given by the teacher. There are hon. Gentleman opposite who think that is not enough. They want the child trained in abstruse or fine theological problems and theories. They therefore wish to superadd something to the common Biblical instruction given by the great school boards of the country, and it is provided in the Bill that on two mornings of the week a teacher of religion —either the curate of the parish, or, in the case of Catholics, if they accept this clause, the priest—would come in and give the instruction which he thought necessary. We are told that this is the endowment of Nonconformity, that it is establishing a new religion, or a Nonconformist religion. Who has ever heard before that the Bible is a Nonconformist book and that instruction given out of the Bible is Nonconformist religion? It is a new religion, according to the view of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham.

I want to say one or two words on Clause 4. I am bound to say that when we come to the extended facilities proposed to be given by that clause we are entering upon somewhat debatable ground, and so far as I am concerned I do not at all like the extended facilities proposed to be given. This clause has, I understand, been rejected by the Roman Catholic Church and by the Anglican Church. The Bishop of London says that the facilities are so grudging and so hedged round by conditions as to be practically useless. What are the main objections to this clause from the standpoint of English Nonconformists whose views I specially hold? In the first place, it appears to me that they render Clause 3 nugatory, or largely nugatory. It is proposed that in all urban districts with a population of 5,000—that means in areas represented by 24,000,000 people out of 32,000,000—sectarian denominational schools should be perpetuated. The Bill provides for an option being given to the local authorities to give sectarian teaching, which would be followed manifestly by religious tests in schools, in places where there is a population of over 5,000, and where the right is claimed by the parents. That would have the effect of plunging almost every local community into a struggle on religious issues at their various local elections. The effect on the teaching staff, in my judgment, would be most pernicious. It would involve the entry into these schools of religious teachers, and I greatly fear that it would perpetuate passive resistance by many English Nonconformists, which has been such an unfortunate result of the legislation of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. I know that it was an amusing thing to the late Minister of Education to find ministers of religion flung into gaol under the provisions of the Act of 1902, and to find a number of persons haled before the magistrates for non-payment of rates. The hon. Gentleman treated this as a most amusing incident of his tenure of office. I trust that he may never have another opportunity of seeing such an exhibition of public antipathy to any Bill.

I would only venture in conclusion to express in regard to this particular clause the hope that the Government will keep an open mind. It is rejected by the Anglican Church, it does not meet the wishes of the Catholic Church, and it is adverse to the strong convictions of a very large percentage of the Nonconformists. If that be the case, why retain it in the Bill? The Bill is a perfectly workable and practical measure without it. There is no compulsion at all upon sectarian school managers. If they choose to close the doors of their schools they can do so, and if they desire to keep the doors open they can do so. In bygone days those great religious communities made great sacrifices in the interest of education. If a religious community feels strongly on this subject, what is its paramount duty? It will keep these schools open; it will not transfer them to the local authority. What the local authorities would have to do would be to build a new commodious up-to-date school in place of what is often at the present moment an old-fashioned, broken-down, insanitary building. I would recall to the mind of the Government a letter that was written in 1870 by Lord Ripon to Mr. Forster when he was getting the Bill of that year through the House of Commons. Lord Ripon was the Minister in attendance on the Crown at Balmoral, and he wrote to Mr. Forster as follows—

> "Your business and mine is simply to try and get the Bill through without alterations to which we object. If Gladstone prefers to carry it by the aid of the Tories rather than by consolidating the bulk of the Liberals that is his affair, not ours, and we must let him do what he likes on that point."

That was an unfortunate piece of advice, and it led to a condition of discontent for many years between Nonconformists and a section of the Liberal Party and Mr. Gladstone's Government. I recall that passage in the progress of the Bill of 1870 for the purpose of suggesting to the Government that if Clause 4 is universally reprobated by the various sections of the community for whom it is intended it would be futile to pursue what it proposes in the face of that opposition.

*SIR HENRY CRAIK: I think if the House wished to learn something of the spirit which animates this Bill it could not have done better than to listen to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. The hon. Gentleman has endeavoured by every means in his power to raise the strongest feelings of religious bitterness and has imported into the debate his own particular religious opinions. In his eloquent and impressive speech the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool began by stating that he spoke entirely for the Catholic Church. I think as he went on, when he spoke words which touched the hearts of all of us, we felt that he had unduly narrowed the scope of his own sympathies. I think also he unduly doubted the sympathy he might obtain from his Anglican fellow subjects. Before I touch on the Bill I should like to touch on one or two points brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. He began by the somewhat unusual process of answering speeches which were delivered elsewhere than in this House, and he quoted as unquestionable authority various newspapers, as if we were bound to accept their statements as the expression of our own views. Some of those views I cannot accept. I do not think they have been expressed within the limits of the discussion in this House. The right hon. Gentleman went on further to speak as to the mandate given at the last election in regard to this question of education. He referred to one or two of the provisions of the Bill, but I think he gave more attention to the opinions expressed on the public platform and in the newspaper articles than to the clauses of the Bill. He refused to accept the criticism as to the guarantee of the facilities in every case, and stated somewhat hotly in reply to such objections that these facilities would be a necessary consequence of the Bill. But he forgot that the trustees might find themselves under the tender mercies of the triumvirate, and might have to accept the position forced upon them. The right hon. Gentleman said that it was necessary that in the four-fifth clause the local authority could not say, "You must teach the faith of the children in your school." It is true that, so far as Section 7 is concerned, it preserves the teachers in their office so long as they live; but the right hon. Member forgot that in case of a vacancy there was no power on the part of the local authority to appoint a teacher to teach the denominational religion. Unlike the hon. Member for Scotland Division, I do not approach the discussion of this Bill as a representative of any particular communion, a position which I am not entitled to assume. It is true that my objections to the Bill are based mainly, although not solely, upon the treatment of the voluntary schools, and upon the attempted solution, which I think no solution at all, of the religious question in education. But I propose to discuss the Bill, not from the standpoint of any particular section, but as inflicting an injury upon constitutional and individual liberty, because it interferes with the rights of the family and the home, and will, I believe, adversely influence educational progress in general, a work in which my whole life has been spent, and the progress of which I believe to be one of the supreme interests of the nation. There are two features which reappear in all these educational discussions. The first is that whenever an English Minister of Education rises to propose a new Bill, he invariably laments the dire necessity laid upon him to address an audience chiefly interested in disputed questions of religious belief, and he then proceeds to occupy the greater part of his speech with little else. Both these features have been repeated by the President of the Board of Education in introducing this Bill. He described the crowded audience which gathered to hear him as attracted not by his eloquence and wit, nor by any interest in education, but only by the prospect of an acrimonious discussion of these questions. He then proceeded to satisfy these tastes by devoting more than nine-tenths of his speech solely to religious disputes, and giving us a modicum of educational bread to an ocean of the sack of sectarian discussion. I venture to claim for my own country that when Education Bills dealing with Scotland have been discussed in this House, the religious question, if not entirely absent, at least occupied very much less prominence in the discussion. I do not think this has been due to any lack of tenacious hold on their religious creeds on the part of my countrymen, nor to the absence of denominational teaching from our educational system, which on the contrary, frankly, avowedly, and as I conceive logically, gives full freedom to all denominations. But in this reiterated complaint of the intrusion of religious feeling into educational questions, is there not something of conscious or unconscious cant? What wonder that the problems concerning men so deeply, and affecting them so vitally as the position of religion in the eternal economy of our schools should arouse strong feeling? While human nature remains what it is, it will continue to be stirred by what lies at the foundation of our children's education, and it is folly to expect that the enthusiastic defence of religious belief will retire from the field until you effect a reasonable settlement. After all, there are only three possible attitudes towards any religious dogma. We may be for the dogma, against the dogma, or we may care nothing either way. Whatever the attitude we assume we are the adherents of a particular sect or form of opinion, to one or other of which every human being must belong, and no one of us has a right to stigmatise his fellow-citizens as narrow-minded or sectarian because he holds a particular view. Which is the best of these views must remain a matter of eternal dispute, and for the settlement of that dispute I think most hon. Members will agree there can be no worse arena that the House of Commons. But although Parliament cannot safely interfere to pronounce on any particular religious dogma, Parliament has a function of supreme importance of which it cannot divest itself, that of laying down the conditions under which diverse religious convictions shall operate. What is to be the rule in the application of these conditions? Can there be any other than to leave the most absolute freedom to all? I would venture to repeat some weighty words of Dr. Chalmers, whose authority Nonconformists will at least not question, which were quoted by the late Lord Playfair in this House in 1871—

> "If there were not,"

said Chalmers,

> "as there certainly was not, a theological Parliament versed in dogma, the next best thing is that in any public measure for the education of the people, Government should abstain from introducing the element of religion at all into their part of the scheme, leaving this matter entirely to the parties who had to do with the erection and management of the schools, which the Government had been called on to assist."

These words I hold express the charter under which all religious communities are entitled to work, and all the difficulties and perplexities which have arisen are due only to your having deserted that principle.

What, briefly, has been the history of State action in regard to education? Will the House allow me to recall it in two or three sentences for the light it throws upon the present position? These Parliamentary grants for the maintenance of the schools are less than seventy years old. At first, and although hon. Members may have forgotten it, for nearly one half of that period the rule was that no school was eligible for grant which was not connected with some recognised religious community. That rule ended only in 1870. I do not assert that it was an expedient rule, or that it should be continued. I only adduce it as showing the attitude assumed by the State and the responsibility which that attitude involved. It was only with the Act of 1870, when a new class of rate supported schools was established, that a novel restriction was imposed, and that last refuge of logical imbecility and of moral cowardice—the Cowper-Temple clause—was invented. Many of us will be ready to admit that illogical as that scheme was it might in practice work fairly enough when the restrictions which it imposed were partial only, and when the voluntary schools still supplied an outlet for freedom. It was introduced into the Bill by Mr. Gladstone as an afterthought and, as we all know, with a scarcely suppressed feeling of dislike. Under no circumstance could he, as he fully admitted, have altered his Bill to introduce this clause unless it had been supplemented by definite denominational teaching in the voluntary schools. Let me quote two or three sentences of Mr. Gladstone's utterances in 1870. On the 10th of June he said—

> "We know perfectly well that practical judgment and the spirit of Christianity combined with common sense may succeed, and does succeed in a vast number of cases, in avoiding the thorny path of controversy in the work of communicating religious instruction to children, but the whole essence of that process lies in its voluntary character."

On the 30th of June he used the following words, which seem almost prophetic of the situation which has now arisen—

> "We do not admit that the simple and devout character of teaching can be secured by an attempt to exclude all reference to tenets and doctrines. That is an exclusion that cannot be effected, and if it could be, ought not to be. It is an invasion of the freedom of religious teaching such as ought not to be tolerated in this country. And those who attempt to sustain it in argument, whether as between party and party in this House, or as between one branch of the legislature and another, will find themselves shattered and discomfited the moment they attempt to bring to the tribunal of reason a proposal to establish by law a system so forced and so unnatural."

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

MERSEY RAILWAY BILL [LORDS] (BY ORDER.)

WIRRAL RAILWAY (EXTENSION OF TIME) BILL [LORDS] (BY ORDER.)

Second Reading deferred till Monday next at a quarter-past Eight of the clock.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was,

> "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question.

SIR HENRY CRAIK, resuming his speech, said:—Under the new regulation the voluntary schools were the safety valve in regard to the religious teaching which was denied to the children in public schools. That compromise then was made possible only by the fact that voluntary schools retained their freedom. For more than thirty years they continued educating three-fifths of the children, and with voluntary contributions amounting to 7s. a head against 35s. from the public grant. That is to say, voluntary subscriptions met one-fifth of the cost and left the State without any burden for the religious education given in the schools. But what wonder that under the new conditions the difficulties of voluntary schools increased? The subscribers had to bear their share of rates for schools from which they and their children derived no benefit. The standard of school-building and school equipment rose, the standard of education got higher and higher, and their resources were necessarily crippled. At the same time, the local authorities questioned the efficiency of these schools and claimed a share of authority in their management, a claim which the State had never made. The Act of 1902 gave that share of management and rightly added to it the duty of contributing to the maintenance to help the necessities of these schools. The Act gave them the power of regulating the whole of the secular instruction, fixing the salaries of the teachers, and regulating their appointment and dismissal save and except in regard to religious instruction. I am ready to admit that it was a hazardous experiment and I hope hon. Members opposite will credit me with an honest desire to understand their point of view. The experiment was hazardous, but it was not unjust that in return for having a share in the management the local authorities should be compelled to bear a share in the burden of maintaining them. I am quite willing to admit that there were under the Act of 1902 certain inequalities, I will not say certain injustices. There were one or two provisions in that Act which I would gladly see altered. The voluntary subcribers had still to bear the cost of premises, which more than covered the cost of religious education. I should have preferred that instead of taking that form, the contribution should have been ear-marked for religious education. I should have preferred also that the voluntary schools had had the option of remaining outside the scope of the local authority and receiving grants as before. I should have preferred also that the rights of minorities should have been better secured by Sections 8 and 9 of the Act of 1902, and that even in single-school areas, schools should have been deemed necessary when, in the words of the Scottish Act, they were "required, regard being had to the religious belief of the parents for whose children they were intended." This might have been costly, but it would not at least have cost that £1,000,000 a year, which the right hon. Gentleman lightly proposes to throw into his Bill without one jot tittle or iota of educational benefit.

And now what is to be done under this new Bill? It begins with a measure which, in spite of the denunciations of the Chancellor of the Duchy, I must still call, as I believe it to be, a sweeping scheme of confiscation, in which trusts are treated with callous indifference. If no arrangement is made under Clause 2 they are left under Clause 8 to an unequal contest before the triumvirate of Commissioners, with all the chances against them. There are aggravations of this star-chamber process which I leave other Members to expose, as I wish to confine myself to the educational effects of the Bill. As a meagre sop we are allowed a string of facilities, differing in degree, according to the accident of a local contest or the nice balance of a fraction. I attach very little value to any of these facilities, and I am not prepared to waste any words in discussing the precise scope which they would cover. We are to have ordinary facilities, special facilities, extended facilities, depending upon the balance of a popular election, and the variation of a fraction. To all these I can only say that the man who has most practical experience of a school will attach least importance to them. It is at the door of a school or in the choice of a teacher that the parent can alone exercise his right of selection. I know of no case in any country where these facilities have served as a solution for any length of time or upon any large scale. I wish to point out only one very practical difficulty. Suppose you have a school of 700, you will require the services of some twenty teachers. Are these to be duplicated for a single hour or portion of hour in a day? How is it possible that you are to provide for this purpose twenty or twenty-five men to come in during an hour or a part of it who are not to be permitted to take part in the rest of the teaching of the school? What is this scheme to carry out? We are told it is to carry out what is the object of this legislation: uniformity of public control. Those words were often used without qualification, but I observed that the Chancellor of the Duchy was careful to qualify the phrase by saying uniformity of public control over expenditure. By what mandate? I am prepared to admit that the nation desired, and rightly desired, public control commensurate with public assistance, but not further. What is this great idea of uniformity which is sought here? Monotony of type is not an object in itself. It is contrary to all our national instincts, it checks wholesome rivalry and wholesome variety. Do you desire to introduce some foreign model like that of Germany, where the children are turned out on a uniform type and where the work of the schools is under a single official? Such a system is not in accordance with the genius of our race to foster and preserve and not to check the variety in type of our schools. It is no educational advantage. It tends to produce dull and mechanical routine, intellectually and morally pernicious. Try such a system in Scotland or in Ireland, and you will find such a response as will make any Government think twice before it continues the experiment.

Is justice different when it passes between or crosses the Irish Channel? [An HON. MEMBER: Yes.] The hon. Member has a more territorial idea of justice than I can subscribe to. What is to be the type of this uniformity you are going to establish? You are to exact a religious uniformity, I care not whether you call it a new or an old uniformity, to be prescribed by the State or by the local authority. It is to be a uniformity apparently in which all subjects as to which different opinions may prevail are to be tabooed. Religion is not the only subject. History, literature, political economy, even the physical sciences are involved. There is to be one type of religion with the teacher for high-priest, yet free to refuse the function and in any case without credentials of his fitness to perform it.

It is said that there is another mandate: that there shall be no tests for teachers. But there is none such now, under any Education Act, except such test as must last, as long as you leave freedom to any body of managers. As to this the right hon.

Gentleman is in a dilemma. Either his concession to the four-fifths schools is a worthless sham, or the local authority must take the creed of a teacher into consideration, and thereby establish a test just as it exists now. And who is to define this uniform religion? We are told by Dr. Clifford, I think, that it is a religion which has no adherents and which no one professes. And in no part of his speech was the right hon. Gentleman so violent as when he repudiated any idea that such a religion expressed the views of the Nonconformists. If the right hon. Gentleman was looking for a short title to his Bill I would suggest to him one of two. The short title of the Bill might be "An Act to require that the religion of nobody shall be taught by anybody," or else "An Act to provide that nobody shall teach anybody's religion." Is this uniform religion to be defined by an annual code, and year by year shorn of some of its essentials? What is a formulary distinctive of any sect? Is it distinctive of one sect? There is no such formulary. Or is it one not received by all sects? Then any new schism may to-morrow whittle away one of the branches of your fundamental Christianity.

But this scheme is not only fundamentally wrong in principle: it is educationally pernicious. In all subjects we have of late insisted that the teacher shall adduce proof of his fitness to teach them with that knowledge and conviction which beget energy and enthusiasm. Is religion to be the one exception? We have widened the conception of education and treated it not merely as the acquiring of a few intellectual aptitudes, and some facility in reading, writing and arithmetic, but as the building up of the character. Is the supreme sanction of moral conduct to be attained by eliminating from the training that which most of us believe to be the strongest element of education? Where, after all, does the parent come in? The right hon. Gentleman told us the other night that he hated the phrase "children of the State" and forced his repudiation by a simile in which he did not spare the blushes of the mace on the table, but is he not here assuming for the State what is the parent's most solemn function? Even to the parent of the child sent as a punitive measure to the industrial school, you give a freedom of choice in the selection of a denominational school, which you deny to thrifty responsible and industrious parents. What has such a scheme led to elsewhere? In America all tradition has contracted religious teaching and with what result? It has been gradually lessened till in some States even the reading of the Bible is prohibited, vast numbers are educated in private schools, and 1,500,000 children are educated in the parochial schools without grant and without supervision. The question is giving serious consideration to those best fitted to judge the position of American education. President Murray Butler of Columbia University tells us that one side of education, its religious side, is neglected, and that they are face to face with the alternative of giving grants to parochial or voluntary schools, or of checking the sphere of the public schools, and instituting a new organisation for religious teaching. Do you wish to allow a whole mass of education to pass out of public supervision? Is such a scheme in accordance with our past history, full as it is with great names of the heroes of Church and of Dissent, of Catholics and of Protestant? Is our literature the product of one religious spirit only? I would appeal to the different sections of the House, whether this meagre fare is that upon which their great traditions have been nurtured. No, Sir, the Bill is wrong educationally, wrong in its scornful treatment of conscientious belief, wrong most of all in its cramping uniformity, and in its restriction of constitutional and parental freedom. The right hon. Gentleman quoted from that prolific fountain head of quotation "The Book of Proverbs," those mystic words: "Where there is no vision the people perish." These familiar words haunt our thoughts as the expression of the great truth that to religion we owe that stirring of the imagination, that quickening of intellectual life which is one of its inestimable benefits. But for millions of our fellowmen pressed by the ills of life, burdened by physical and moral pain, saddened by misfortune and bereavement for whom life has little to offer, it holds out a greater gain in a definite creed, opening wider hopes and showing a sunshine behind the dark clouds of life. Do not, I beseech you, banish these hopes by restricting the freedom of their creed. This scheme may give to you the freedom you desire, but do not seek to remind us that there may be times

> "When a factious band agree
> To call it freedom when themselves are free."

Leave the school free as a nurturing place of character, as an influence of the widest intellectual scope, inculcating the best sanction to moral conduct, free to steer its course

> "True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home."

You are now in the heyday of your power, the masters of many legions which may enable you for the moment to overcome our opposition. But time and the spirit of the nation are with us, and far beyond these walls in many a humble home, in many a lonely village, in the great centres of population gathering in their vast assemblies, opinion is crystalising against you. These forces will have their reprisals, and they will come in other sort and with greater dignity than are seen in the petty vindictiveness of this cramping, this ungenerous, this illiberal Bill.

*MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.): I only address the House because, after the speech of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, I desire to express the view held by the English Liberal Catholic body. No one will deny the importance of that view. The House must remember that we are a very large body numerically. We are as large numerically as Liverpool and Manchester combined, and larger than Birmingham and its surrounding group of lesser towns. Though it is true that probably the main part of that body is Irish in origin, and therefore to some extent attached to the Irish Party for its defence, yet it must also be remembered that it exists in England, and that it returns to Parliament Members, nearly always Liberal, who are pledged usually to the Irish voters, and always to the Catholic voters of their Division to retain if possible the present privileges of the Catholic schools. The hon. Member for Louth made use of the word "moderate," and I have also heard the word "compromise" mentioned as regards the Catholic schools. I cannot too emphatically point out that those two words are absolutely meaningless when the House of Commons is dealing with Catholic faith. The House may tyrannically insist on their having less, but English Catholics cannot be content with less for their Catholic children than Catholic schools with Catholic teachers teaching the Catholic religion, and impressing the children all the time. Though I cannot go into the whole "why" of that demand, I can give you a glimpse of it. I desire the House to remember the history of the religious body to which I belong. There is no machinery for teaching history properly in the Universities, and still less in the great public schools of this country which are attended by the wealthy; if there were, no educated Englishman would be ignorant of the fact that in the history of religious persecution since Diocletian nothing can compare with the persecution of the Catholic people of this country by the wealthy and official classes. It has not been a popular persecution, but a cold, deliberate, and bloody persecution on the part of the men who got hold of the land of the country after the dissolution of the monasteries. Can you wonder if, after twc centuries of such suffering, we emerged a wholly distinct and highly homogeneous body? Right or wrong, all the rest of the country stands as a body of English Protestants unless I except the small body of the Jews. The hon. Member for Louth asked why, if we allow our members to go to the Universities, we will not allow them to go to public schools which are Protestant in purpose. I can answer him, for I have been to one of these Universities. I love my college, though I know it to be thoroughly Protestant. I can tell the hon. Member why I can so accept it. It is because the effect of University teaching is vastly different from the effect of school teaching. The former is critical and falls upon a mature mind; the latter is formative and moulds a mind yet plastic. I never knew any Catholic who went to Oxford and was in any way influenced by the dominant doctrine of the place. But a little child must accept what it is told, and that which it is told finds a permanent hold. If the Catholics are making what seems to be a violent claim, it appears to me we may yet find a way by which without a breach of any Liberal principle, Catholic schools may yet be saved. It is true, not only of myself, but of every Catholic in England, that the preservation of the Catholic schools is far and away the first of the political controversies in which he may be concerned. I should not hesitate for a moment if I found it impossible satisfactorily to represent my constituency and yet to stand as I do for my religion, as to what course I should take. A political career is nothing to us compared with our religion; nor is wealth. It would be an easy matter, as a mere mechanical contrivance, to make the Catholic body a separate body with a particular privilege; but that solution as an English Liberal I reject. Catholics must have their rights on some general principle, and that principle is the right of the parent to have his child instructed, immersed in the religion for the glory and defence of which he brought that child into the world. The Catholics feel that they are in a sense exiles in this country, misunderstood both in regard to their vices and their virtues; and so long as they retain that feeling they demand the right of maintaining the things for which they have struggled so long and so bitterly. The right of the parent in these conditions is inherent. I agree, however, with the view that for the vast majority of Protestant parents in this country the Bill is sufficient, and provides that children shall be brought up in the religion to which their parents are attached. On that account I accept the Bill, and will vote for the Second Reading. There are I know strong arguments against our claim. There is the argument that if you feel this desire for an abnormal system, then you must pay for it. That argument would be sound if you were not asking us to pay for your system. If you could devise a purely neutral and secular system, then you could logically say, "We do not ask you to pay for our morals or our philosophy, neither should we pay for yours;" but when you ask us to endow the opinions of the vast majority of the people of this country, so long as we are a minority we can stand up and say, "as we pay, so we must receive." There is a last and a powerful argument against us which is this. If all sects demanded such rights those rights could not be given, because the complexity would be too great and the whole thing would be impossible. But this argument ignores the practical conditions of the problem. There is no great multiplicity of religions: there are not twenty or thirty different kinds of Englishmen. Upon this question there is a vast mass of solid opinion, and even the man in the street will readily describe to you his views, which will be found to be the same as the principles which have been embodied in this Bill. There are amongst you, in fact, only two sects who really differ from you, namely, the Jews and the Catholics, and practically these are the only two you have to consider. I do not want to wound the susceptibilities of any one. I know that here and there are groups of Protestant parents who demand a highly definite dogmatic teaching. What about such parents? I say if you can find them and get them together; if you can get four-fifths of such parents to demand and urge the teaching of a particular creed, to say what that creed is, and what kind of teacher they want, then there will be no difficulty about the matter. I will give an example. Perhaps the Greek Church in Salford or Manchester might desire a particular teaching, and they might choose a particular teacher. But, for the rest, I do not think, with the exceptions I have indicated, that any sect will refuse to accept the simple Bible teaching. Now what is the practical suggestion which I have to make? I am speaking, not only of the Catholic body, but also for the great bulk of those who voted at the last election, when I say that a single school area should, in the future, be neutral even if the school has been Catholic. You have no right to teach even a small minority something which they do not believe in. I agree that wherever you have four-fifths, by whatever machinery you give, demanding a particular definite teaching there they should have it. It is also equally important that the teacher should be nominated or suggested by the body which represents the views of the parents, but it is essential that the public authority should have the right to say, "We will not have this or that teacher and you must suggest another," until a suitable person is selected, always, of course, with an appeal to the Education Board. I believe that the English people in local administration are as just as and perhaps more just than the people of any other country, but there are necessarily a few exceptions, and they are quite enough to light a flame which is sure to be felt throughout the whole of our corporate body. Therefore we must have an appeal to the

Education Department which is something central and far removed, and which we can trust better than the momentary fads and bigotry of a local body. Finally there is our claim to have new schools recognised. It is intended by Clause 5 to give minorities this right. The simplest way would be to establish proof that the school is required by educating the minimum number of children and then the public will take over the responsibility. One thing is certain. We have determined that we are not going back to the government of the stockjobbing or the form of government which has mis-governed Ireland. I appeal to the Government to permit us to continue along the lines I have indicated by some such concessions as I have outlined. I will conclude by saying that for the general purposes of education and its general principles I doubt whether any man who knows the English people and the characteristics of the poor artisan who sends his child to school can sincerely declare that this Bill does not meet the wishes and general opinions of the vast majority of Englishmen.

*MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I hope the House will allow me to examine the Bill from a somewhat different point of view from the speakers who have preceded me. I speak for no religious sect nor for any anti-religious sect. I have not even the advantage of speaking for a particular Party, because in my quarter of the House, keenly interested as we are in all educational problems, we are bound to consider the Bill as being, to a very small extent, an Education Bill, and, to a very large extent, a sectarian Bill. That being the case the Labour Party is not unanimous about it, although a decided majority of the Party view with sympathy the observations and the criticisms I am about to make on the measure. I regret that no provision has been made for a national system of training colleges for teachers. I regret that no attempt, or at least a very ineffective attempt, has been made to restore democratic control over education. There are two pre-eminent points which characterise this Bill. The first is that it contains a genuine attempt to bring the fabric of the schools under popular control. The second point is that it makes an effort to abolish tests for teachers. Upon these grounds and these alone we are prepared to say that the Bill ought to go to Committee. We are not prepared to say that the provisions under either or both of these heads are sufficient for our purpose, or that they are sufficiently clearly stated, but they will enable very drastic Amendments to be made in Committee, and consequently we propose to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill. The position from which I venture to criticise the Bill is that of secular education. As certain protests have been made in the House to-day against what has been called hitting below the belt, may I also enter my protest against various processes of hitting below the belt. Since the First Reading of the Bill those who are in favour of the teaching of secular subjects have been characterised as secularists. Certain bishops have been telling us that those who are in favour of secular education alone in the public schools are in favour of secularism, that is, the system of philosophy known as secularism. I deny that secular education and secularism are one and the same thing. I deny that secularists only stand up in this House and outside the House in favour of secular instruction. As a matter of fact I shall offer some observations to show that those who are supporting the Bill are much more, in practice at any rate, although not in theory, in favour of secularism than we who are in favour of the teaching of secular subjects only. It is a curious fact, of which both sides of the House well know the significance, that every Labour movement, from the north pole to the south, and from the rising to the setting sun, is in favour of a secular system of public schools. In no country in the world, whether Catholic or Protestant, and under no form of government whatever, do we find an organised Labour Party in favour of denominational or undenominational education. Why? I venture to say that the chief reason is that those who belong to the Labour Party send their children to these schools. I am amazed at certain right hon. and hon. Gentlemen rising here and taking such a keen interest in the religious education of the children. What proportion of the bishops, and what proportion of the Members of this

House who have been taking part in the debate, are going to send their children to the schools we are discussing? If they would allow us to settle the education that is to be presented to our own children, and for which we are going to make ourselves responsible, there would be less of the sectarian spirit which unfortunately is going to mark the discussion of this Bill. Moreover, the position which we take now, and which we will take throughout the discussion of this Bill, is the position always taken by the leading Nonconformists, who have been the most eloquent, the most earnest, and the most reputable champions of the policy of confining public education to secular subjects. Men whose names are held in reverence in every community holding Nonconformist creeds saw, every time that an educational crisis such as this occurred, that the one security of educational peace, and that the one hope of uniting the country, was to say that, so far as the public schools of the State are concerned, religious instruction so-called ought to be kept out, because, except on that basis, there could be no peace, no settlement, and no finality whatever. Unfortunately, from the very beginning of the organised system of elementary education for the children of the working classes we have had this sectarian strife. The State has from time to time honestly and conscientiously done its best to bring peace between the warring sects in this matter. Any one acquainted with the history of elementary education in this country during the last hundred years is aware that it has been one long, bitter, heart-rending series of attempts to advance the frontier of education in opposition to warring sectarianism, and unfortunately the attempts have been too often defeated by that warring. Reference has been made to the debates of 1870, when Mr. Richard, the predecessor of my hon. friend for Merthyr Tydvil, moved an Amendment to the Bill of that year to the effect that only secular education should be provided in the schools to be established by the Bill. I regret to say that of the sixty men who went into the Lobby that night in support of Mr. Richard, so far as I can make out—and I have refreshed my memory as recently as to-day—only two survive as Members of this House. Fortunately, and may I hope significantly, the present Prime Minister was one of those who voted for secular education in 1870. May I remind those who have still the idea lurking in their minds that secular education is merely secularism of some words used by Mr. Gladstone when dealing with the same arguments—I can hardly call them arguments, but with the same stick as has been used to-day to beat those who are in favour of secular education? Mr. Gladstone said he was satisfied that support of the Amendment was compatible with zeal and respect for religion. That is the position of a very considerable number of us on the present occasion.

What is the position to-day? The source of this Bill was the controversy of recent years. We had in 1902 a Bill introduced by the late Government. It was a Bill which undoubtedly effected some excellent reforms, and in many respects it did work which ought to have been done years before. But part of the Bill gave rise to religious controversy, and we have had the old story, the old trouble, the old difficulty. Part of the Bill placed the Church of England in relation to other denominations on an unfair footing. The result was the passive resistance movement. The Government propose to put it right by simple Bible teaching. What is this House asked to do? I hope that the House will ask itself honestly in the light of experience of the last century—is this Bill going to establish peace? The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy finished his speech by appealing for peace. Appeals for peace are excellent, and I must remark that in the present state of the controversy they do indicate a certain measure of Christianity, but appeals for peace are not enough, for, after all, you have to state the conditions of peace. Unless you state the conditions and unless your appeals for peace are based upon careful inquiry into all the conditions which are honestly possible your appeals will have no influence on the controversy before us. I feel perfectly certain, and especially after the impressive speech of my hon. friend the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, that there can be no compromise. You cannot compromise with those speeches. There is no use in asking the hon. Gentleman to sit down at a table with the hon. Member for Louth and his friends, and to lay their heads together with those holding other views, in order to discover some common ground which would satisfy them both in regard to the establishment of a public system of religious instruction in this country. I say that the very idea is futile, and it can be disposed of right away. My hon. friend the Member for South Salford stated categorically, and it struck me as being as impressive as the statement of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division, that there can be no compromse between the representatives of the various religious organisations. These declarations have been made even at this early period in the discussion of the Bill before the House Now then, what are we going to do? There are two points that were to be settled by the recent election. We are told that the electors of the country have given to the Government a mandate to establish public control, and to abolish sectarian tests for teachers. The first question is how far this Bill carries out that mandate given by the country. It proposes to establish undenominational Bible teaching. Is that carrying out the mandate? It is all very well for certain Members of the House who hold my own religious opinions to come and make speeches on the ground that we are right, and that every other body is wrong. They say that Bible reading is not sectarian. I agree with them. This House is in the position of a Court of Justice. We are not elected as a General Assembly of Divines, or as a Convocation, or as a Committee for the revision of Articles of Union, or to discuss certain common grounds for such a revision. We are here for a purpose of taking an objective view of the religious views of the electors. We are here for the purpose of considering what is the mind of the people as a whole, and then of drafting a Bill which will bring us educational peace, so far as sectarian rivalry is concerned. It has been said honestly and truly by two hon. Members in debate, and with more bitterness by speakers outside, not only of the Roman Catholic religion, but of the English Catholic religion, that simple reading of the Bible without comment is denominational teaching. It is not for us to argue or to dispute that point, but to inquire into the facts of the case, and decide as to the effects of public control. But accepting the statement, the question is, how will the Bill bring peace? It simply gives ground for a more aggravated form of passive resistance than the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition by his Bill of 1902 gave to Nonconformists. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no."] How does public control come in, in accordance with Clause 4? Clause 4 is either a real thing, with substance in it, or it is not. If it is put in merely to draw in those who disagree with the Bill in order to induce them to trust to the tender mercies of the local authority, then Clause 4 would be better out of the Bill. If Clause 4 is a genuine attempt to meet the opposition of Roman Catholics and English Catholics, then you are going to supply school room with public money to be used for denominational teaching, and you must appoint masters and teachers to give that teaching with the atmosphere of their creed. And whether you like it or not, and whether the local authorities like it or not, you are bound to appoint to these schools managers as well as teachers who will reflect that atmosphere. No sooner will Clause 4 begin to be operative than you will discover that you are bound to sacrifice some of the pledges of public control which were made at the general election and repeated in this House.

Moreover, we are told that there are to be no tests imposed on teachers. But again assume that Clause 4 is genuine, does any hon. Member who has had experience of these schools, as I have had, really believe in his heart of hearts that these schools are to be accepted by Roman Catholics, or English Catholics, or by Jews unless the headmaster is in sympathy with the atmosphere of the schools? You are bound to create under Clause 4 the system of denominational education in all its fulness which we have experienced during the last four years, subsidised and financed by public authorities out of public funds, and controlled by the body of managers such as those which exist at the present moment in non-provided schools. It is all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to say that he is not going to compel teachers to teach the Bible. You may put that down on paper, but in practice it will not work out. Those who have had a large acquaintance with the management of schools know that although very many people might refuse to give Bible teaching, they cannot possibly afford to do it. Their heart is not in it, and they regard it as a mere mechanical operation. If the teaching of the Bible in the schools is to be a guarantee of religious instruction inside or outside the schools, you are bound to face the conclusion that a man or woman ought to believe that which he or she teaches, if it is to have any regenerating effect on the children. You must remember that the general effect of teaching the Bible is to make it a purely formal matter, and I can say that, having had the benefit of a Scotch education. We were told all about the Kings of Israel and the succession of the prophets, and when we studied the life of Paul we were told only of the number of places he visited, and the number of churches he had founded. I think that the Bible teaching was dealt with in a much better way than that in the board schools in this country. I have been, however, much struck with the fact that, though I have consulted several most competent and experienced teachers whose advice I value very highly, no one has been in favour of retaining the Bible as a text book in the school he controlled. [" Oh, oh."]

What is going to happen as the result of this Bill? The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has told us that there has been no strife; but as a matter of fact in the old school board days the majority of the elections were always fought between Churchmen, Nonconformists, and Secularists. Even in the election of Education Committees since 1902, as was predicted, there has been a great amount of religious strife, and I believe that under this Bill there will be a violent eruption of religious strife. You cannot possibly get out of that. You are now to have the local municipal authorities charged with the power of discriminating between sect and sect; and they are, therefore, to be brought into closer touch with warring sectarian organisations. I feel perfectly certain that before twelve months are over in a great many places in this country one of the chief questions before the electors will be questions which divide Church and Chapel. Moreover, denominational education is going to be continued under this Bill, retaining its foothold as in the past, and yet it is to be, to a certain extent, punished for remaining denominational education. The Government, and the right hon. Gentleman the Minister of Education will not always be in power; the time will come when the present majority in the House will be upset; and in the meantime the denominationalists are pledged to go on with their agitation. The result will be that when the majority of the House is changed once more there will be re-created a complete denominational system, and there will be a rekindling of passive resistance. But there is an important educational side to all this. The real question at the present time at issue in regard to moral instruction is whether the present form or practice of religious instruction is a fruitful form of instruction. If hon. Members who are in favour of this Bill can prove that it is, then so far as we are concerned any opposition we have to offer to the Bill will be withdrawn. But is it so? I venture to say that if you examine the moral results of the teaching in those schools where the Bible is used as a text book, and the results in those where it is not so used, you will find it very difficult to draw any line of distinction between denominational schools on the one hand as forming a public moral factor and provided schools on the other, and, where schools do not use the Bible as a text book, you will find it difficult to draw a line between them and those districts where the schools do use the Bible with or without comment. Will the Government give us the facts of the case? Will they tell us the value of the simple reading of the Bible in our public schools? What is the atmosphere which it creates in our public schools as part and parcel of their curriculum? Will they tell us upon what they base the statement that it is of character-making advantage?

The hon. Member who has just sat down quoted to us a statement by Professor Butler who, sharing the view of every educationalist in this country deplored the fact that the American schools, in the same way as the English schools, have somehow failed in character building. The hon. Member has suggested that if you place the Bible in the schools it will solve the problem, but will it? In a report which has just been placed in the hands of the House by one of His Majesty's inspectors for the West Division of Scotland it is stated—

> "If the all-important end of education is a moral one, I am decidedly of opinion that some direct and definite moral instruction should be introduced at the supplementary course stage, and that this instruction should be given by the headmaster and the head-mistress of the school. Many pupils come into collision with the criminal law after they leave school through sheer ignorance of the dangers that beset their path and the temptations that lie in their way. I believe that the formation of right ideas and the rational appreciation of them are highly important, also more especially just before a pupil is launched on the world to fight and fend for himself."

There is the comment made by one of the most competent inspectors of the Scottish schools where the Bible is taught, and precisely the same language, or at any rate the same idea, is expressed by Dr. Butler with regard to the American schools. What happens in schools where the Bible is used? At 9 o'clock the school assembles, the teacher opens a book which happens to be the Bible. He reads in a great many cases verses out of it. He then asks his pupils to sing a hymn. The book is then closed. He opens a geography or history book and the lessons go on in the ordinary way. ["Oh!"] I am talking about the condition of things prevailing in Scotland, where we have been told by an hon. Member of this side of the House, who ought to know, considering his intimate connection with the Education question in Scotland the best conditions in regard to Bible reading prevail. All I can say is, that I have been a teacher in Scotland, and I know what happened in the schools with which I was connected, and what I say is perfectly true of non-provided schools also. I assert that that accurately describes the process of Bible instruction in our public schools as a matter of fact. How can we expect anything else, or wonder at the failure of Bible teaching to produce character, used as it is as an arithmetic book or book of geography. The English schools, as far as I can gather, are pretty much in the same position. The Bible is used as a text book for the purpose of telling some story or other to children in precisely the same way that the geography or arithmetic book is used, and the result is shown in the extract which I have read to the House from one of the ablest Scottish inspectors. The Secretary of State for India, in a book which is one of the few religious books which the nineteenth century produced, has laid his finger upon the real source of the difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose wrote in that book "On Compromise" the following sentences—

> "Let a youth be trained in simple and straight-forward recognition of the truth that we can know, and can conjecture, nothing with any assurance as to the ultimate mysteries of things. Let his imagination and his sense of awe be fed from those springs, which are none the less bounteous because they flow in natural rather than supernatural channels. Let him be taught the historic place and source of the religions which he is not bound to accept unless the evidence for their authority by-and-by brings him to another mind. A boy or girl trained in this way has an infinitely better chance of growing up with the true spirit and leanings of religion implanted in the character than if they had been educated in formulae which they could not understand, by people who do not believe them."

I hope we may use these words with reverence and without altogether committing ourselves to the general position which the right hon. Gentleman took up in that book. The effect of all this has been that we have succeeded wonderfully well in secularising the Bible without moralising education, and it is because I am opposed to that system being carried out upon moral and ethical grounds I take up the position I do. My final point is that we have heard a great deal about the rights of parents. I deny that those rights exist. [Cries of "Oh."] Let us see what hon. Members who expressed their dissent mean. They do not merely mean that a parent has a right to teach his child his religion; if they meant that it might be an arguable proposition. But that is not what they mean. They mean that a parent has a right to demand that the State shall educate his children in his religion. That is a totally different proposal. Theoretically a parent has no right to say the State shall educate his child or children in his religious belief, because the moment he establishes or tries to establish that right, he comes counter to the rights of other citizens who refuse to pay rates or taxes for the propagation of creeds which they do not hold or approve of. The right of the citizen, therefore, comes into opposition at once with the assumed right of the parent and it is impossible to enforce the assumed right. Moreover, the child has a right against its parent. The child has a perfect right to go to its parent or to get some one else to go to the parent and say that the State is in certain respects its guardian. [Cries of "Oh."] If that is not so, why have we got our child labour laws? The child has a right to go to the State and ask the State to protect its mind so that its mind will be prepared and nurtured in the best possible way to meet honestly and without fear those great problems which we all have to attempt to solve. That right, I imagine, is as inviolable, from the point of view of the child, as the assumed right of the parent to bring up the child in those assumed religious dogmas which he has chosen as satisfactory. I know that that doctrine is extremely unpopular and will give rise to great prejudice. I know there is no doctrine which is surrounded with more prejudice than that, or which can be approached with more unreasoning doubt, but notwithstanding, I say, by your industrial legislation, you are beginning to recognise the fact, and sooner or later in your religious and moral education also you will have to recognise it.

There are, then, two objections to this Bill, first, that it is a measure which is not going to bring peace. It is going to hand over to the next generation every problem in denominational education which the last generation handed over to us. The second objection is that you are not going to advance the quality of our moral instruction or make any contribution to the problem of the building up of character which is the great practical problem of our schools. If, however, you make up your minds that the education given in our schools from public money during school hours and by Civil Servants must be in secular subjects only, you will be laying the foundation of peace, and your appeal to peace will be a real appeal, backed by a Bill which lays the foundation of that peace. Members of this House, when another Education Bill is before it, will go back to the debates of 1906 as we have been going back to the debates of 1870. They will read the speeches delivered on this Bill for the purpose of trying to find out what our minds were, and they will discover that the problem they have to face then is the problem we have to face now, and they will deplore the fact that the Legislature of to-day threw the difficulty upon them, and left the solution of this question to another generation. They will take up our speeches where we leave off, and the divisions which are going to take place upon this measure will surely be repeated thirty years hence. The State is a secular organisation, and it ought to say to the Church and the family:—"It is your responsibility to teach religion to the children—to teach that which is of no value unless it touches the heart with a strange regenerative influence." For this reason I deplore the weakness of the Bill, though for the reasons I have stated I propose to vote for the Second Reading.

*DR. MACNAMARA: I cannot take up the speech of my hon. friend where he leaves off, because I have first to reply to the challenge of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, who moved the rejection of the Bill to-day. But I do venture to say that his view of how the Bible is taught in the provided schools of this country is entirely distorted. The right hon. Gentleman for Dover, in moving the rejection of this Bill, said that the State had never departed from its policy of neutrality in educational matters. I interrupted and said it had in 1902. The right hon. Gentleman challenged me to prove it, and I venture therefore, to give three small points in proof of my contention, and in justification of my interruption. The first of these points is that the Act of 1902—the Act of the Leader of the Opposition—put the denominational schools upon the rates of the locality, of which I do not complain, and which I think was a right thing to do, and which I think was a great reform, but it avoided the direct consequence of popular control, which is that the moment you place public education on public funds, you must follow that up by giving full public control. The right hon. Gentleman's Act got over that difficulty in this way. It gave a non-provided school six managers, of whom the public had two and the trustees four.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

*DR. MACNAMARA: Really the right hon. Gentleman seems to have forgotten his Act very soon; under the Act of 1902, the trustees; have four managers, and the public two. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover has a very fantastic view of what the neutrality of the State is. Again, at the present moment there are over 30,000 head teacherships in this country which are salaried out of public funds. As to 18,000 of those head teacherships, no Nonconformist can, under any circumstances, apply for the post of head teacher, and in 16,220 nobody can get the position who is not a member of the Church of England. That again, I think, is a fantastic notion of neutrality. In the third place, to go no further, although I could multiply these illustrations, there are 7,987 places open to King's scholars in the residential training colleges, but in 4,309 of those places, no matter how successful the King's scholar had been, he would not be admitted unless he changed his religion and became a member of the Church of England. Take my own case, not that I want to put it forward in any way, but it happens to be a case in point. In the year 1879 I obtained a King's Scholarship entitling me to a place in one of these residential colleges. There was one next door to me in Exeter, and I should have been very high indeed in the Exeter list, but I did not care to become a member of the Church of England; so I had to come to London and bear the expense, while others far below me on the Government l st went into that institution. That is a strange and fantastic notion of neutrality. The right hon. Gentleman ought to know that the electors sent us here to redress the departure from neutrality set up by the Act of 1902.

MR. WYNDHAM: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but he seems to be courting interruption from me. I merely wish to say that I cannot reply to him now, but I reserve my opinion and will deal with this at a later stage of the Bill.

*DR. MACNAMARA: The electors sent us here to redress the departure from neutrality set up by the Act of 1902, and if the right hon. Gentleman does not know that, the electoral field is strewn with the stricken forms of his ex-colleagues who do know it. A conspicuous fact has come to light since this Bill was read a first time. It is now unanimously conceded that public control must follow the placing of the schools upon the rates. My view is that this general admission is a very great step along the road of educational reform. It is less than four years ago that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition reserved four seats out of six on the Board of Management to the trustees and gave two to the public. When the Bill was in Committee the hon. Member for East Mayo asked for a slight modification of that.

MR DILLON (Mayo, E.): And I was denounced on all sides for so doing.

*DR. MACNAMARA: The hon. Member for East Mayo said—"Do not give four seats to the trustees, give two to the denominationalists, two to the parents and two to the local authority." He was, as he truly says, denounced for that and now the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover gets up full of zeal for the parents.

But leaving that, Sir, the discussions upon this question during the past month show that the opposition to this Bill falls into two lines. First, it takes the line that the transfer of the denominational schools to the authority is confiscation. [Cries of "Hear, hear.] Hon. Members assent to that. That is not said by the right hon. Member for Dover, but he gave us some very florid paraphrases upon it. I should like to examine at close quarters this argument. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover has said that the denominational buildings which, it is alleged, are to be confiscated under the Bill, are worth £32,000,000 and that the money has been subscribed because of religious zeal.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The hon. Gentleman must do justice to my fairness. I said it was not all so subscribed, and that it was idle to argue that some of this sum was not subscribed for other reasons.

*Dr. MACNAMARA: It is of course notorious that much of this money has been contributed for other reasons—to keep out the higher charge of a School Board. I do not think the directors of the London and North-Western Railway Company contribute to the schools at Crewe for love of the Church Catechism. I do not think the directors of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company contribute to the voluntary schools at Dover because they want specific Church teaching. No, they want the thing on the cheap—and many a good Nonconformist has joined them in it.

Many a staunch Nonconformist has swallowed any amount of Church Catechism to be let off lightly in the local charge. But supposing the money was all subscribed for reasons of religious zeal. The Primate said, in a letter to Churchmen on December 12th, 1903, that the value of the buildings, which the right hon. Gentleman opposite has put at £32,000,000, was £22,000,000. The discrepancy shows the inflamed state of mind of reckless opponents of the Bill. Dr. Moorhouse, the late Bishop of Manchester, stated in the House of Lords on December 10th, 1902, that the rental of the denominational buildings was worth £715,000 a year. The Government sets aside £1,000,000, and yet hon. Gentlemen opposite talk of confiscation! There is not a Bishop on the Episcopal Bench who would not be ready to be confiscated as often as you like at the same price. But that is not all. The public authority already bears the charge for wear and tear in the non-provided schools. Under the Bill they are to bear the structural alterations of the fabric. Dr. Moorhouse told the House of Lords, on the same occasion, that structural alterations in their buildings cost the Church of England £700,000 a year. The Government are handing over £1,000,000 yearly for what is estimated at an annual value of £715,000, and, over and above that, they are taking over the structural alterations of the fabric. No wonder the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover calls this a precious Bill. Let me just quote what I understand to be the real facts of the case. The Bishop of Hereford has said—

> "As regards the Church schools in our own diocese, we should, under this Bill, be better off financially than ever before, if we agreed to let them to the local authority on a repairing lease. We should be freed from all worry or anxiety about improvements or extensions, or any of the recurring requirements of the Board of Education, whilst our clergy would be able to give or to secure for the children systematic instruction in Prayer-book and Catechism as regularly and as fully as they have ever yet done in times past."

I think that is a fair estimate of the case. Let me, with great respect, offer a word of warning to the extreme denominationalists who talk about confiscation. I would recommend them to agree with their adversary quickly while he is in the way with them. I certainly think the local authority, if there is much haggling, will say, "Go away. We decline to treat with you. We will build our own schools. We will spread the cost over sixty years. The financial burden will be immediately less, and, in the long run, we will have a building of our own, and, all the time, we shall have complete control of it."

The other main attack on the Bill rages around the eternal religious question. It seems to me there are three courses open to the Government in dealing with this question. They might have said they would dispense denominational teaching all round as part of a State system. I think that is hopelessly impracticable. There are too many denominations, unfortunately. Take a particular instance—a school at Drury Lane. Under the Industrial Schools Act, which provides that religious instruction is to be on the basis of denominational teaching all round, everything went on at that school very happily for many years. Half the children, roughly, were Roman Catholics. All of a sudden there appeared a Presbyterian child. To my mind the needs of a single Presbyterian have as much claim upon the public as sixty Catholics or forty Protestants. I cannot see how we could meet the opinions of that particular Presbyterian by appointing a permanent teacher solely for him. Therefore, I dismiss that as entirely impracticable, and if it were not impracticable, which it is, it would bitterly accentuate sectarian differences during childhood which might very well be left to a more advanced age. I remember that the Leader of the Opposition once said that he was opposed to segregation in these matters. For these reasons, therefore, I dismiss the first of these three alternatives. The second proposal is that of the hon. Member for Leicester. You might say, "Very well, we cannot dispense purely denominational teaching all round, and we will confine the instruction to purely secular teaching." I admit that that is absolutely logical and fair to the body at large, but it is hopelessly out of touch with the national sentiment. Has the hon. Member for Leicester considered this point? It will commit tens of thousands of the children of our cities to a youth untouched by Christian truths. The Secular Party may emerge well from this controversy because it is already a powerful Party, and very likely will be reinforced by the man in the street who, sick and tired of theological bickering, will adopt it as a policy of despair. It is always the theologian who blocks the way to educational progress, and therefore the man in the street may very well be induced to associate himself with the advanced advocate of secular schools and go in for the abolition of the Bible altogether in the schools. Personally, however, I should oppose that proposal. Then, having dismissed denominationalism as impracticable, having dismissed a system of secular schools as being out of touch with national sentiment, there remains only the system of the State's giving simple Biblical teaching, leaving to outside teachers the task of adding a denominational superstructure. That is the scheme of this Bill. Religious teaching need not be given unless the local authority desire it. It is not a very new feature, for it is the fundamental provision of the Cowper-Temple system as laid down in 1870. Then there is a clause under which no child need attend religious instruction unless its parents desire. That is the by-law of the late Government issued through the Board of Education, and if that makes for secular schools it must not be placed at our door but at the door of the late Board of Education over which the hon. Baronet the Member for Oxford University presided.

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON: I must enter a caveat here. The hon. Member is wholly mistaken in his construction of that by-law.

*Dr. MACNAMARA: At any rate I know what the practice has been under it. Under that by-law an answer was given the other day showing that a considerable number of local authorities have allowed parents to absent their children during the time of religious instruction. I do not make any complaint of that, but it should not be used as an argument against us for setting up a secular system. For the first time in the history of this country, under this Bill no teacher will be compelled to give religious instruction unless he likes, and that will take away many of those unfortunate aspects of the religious controversy which have been referred to. Clause 7, Sub-section 2, is a real charter of liberty to the teacher, and in my opinion, will do much to improve religious instruction in the schools. In addition to all that, there are wide facilities for specific denominational teaching.

Let me deal for a moment with the opposition to this scheme. This scheme is opposed by the advocates of secular teaching and also by the High Churchmen. The latter contend that simple Bible teaching under State auspices amounts practically to an endowment of Nonconformity. That is a most amazing proposition. It rests upon the curious fallacy that the Bible is exclusively the property of Nonconformists. Although I am only a layman, I confess that I really thought up to the 9th of April and the discussion which ensued that the Bible was the common joint possession of all members of the Christian community. Do Gentlemen opposite realise the effect on the country of this opposition to Bible teaching? The common person is amazed, the unsophisticated layman is disgusted. When I hear great prelates denouncing simple Bible teaching as undermining the Christian faith, I do not know whether he is more amazed at the sublimity of their arrogance or the depth of their profanity. They resist preference being given to the Bible, and they do this conscientiously in the name of Christianity! I will pass no further comment upon this attitude beyond saying that I do not understand their position at all or their point of view. I do not deny that, from a logical point of view, a case may be made out against the preferential treatment of the Bible, which is hopelessly indefensible from the point of view of dry logic and doctrinaire, but it is a system which has got behind it thirty-five years of admirable work. Mr. Forster, in presenting his Bill in 1870, said—

> "I have the fullest confidence that in the reading and explaining of the Bible, what the children will be taught will be the great truths of Christian life and conduct, which all of us desire they should know, and no effort will be made to cram into their poor little minds theological dogmas which their tender age prevents them understanding."

For thirty-five years ministers of all denominations, bishops of the Established Church, even Dr. Knox, and others have sat down together and prepared syllabuses of instruction for the giving of Bible teaching under this system, and that instruction has been given with remarkable devotion and discretion by the teachers. This simple Bible teaching has been taught with the approval of the parents and it has been wholesome to the children. Cardinal Manning once said—

> "If the Bible is read in the school, and if prayers are read and Christian hymns are sung, I could not honestly or fairly say that that is not a Christian school."

Dr. Ryle, when Bishop of Liverpool, said—

> "I thank God for the Board schools of Liverpool."

I said on the First Reading that this Bill is an honest and painstaking effort to solve an almost insoluble problem. I say so now after a careful consideration of the provisions of the measure. I do not think the Bill is perfect, and I recommend to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Education an extremely valuable letter in *The Times* of last Monday from the Bishop of Ripon, and the reasonable propositions of the Convocations of Canterbury and York. I think it is possible to make modifications in it—always subject to these vital principles, which cannot be tampered with—full popular control and no test for teachers—modifications which might make the future administration of the Bill when it becomes law more acceptable to certain sections. I suggest that Clause 4 should be mandatory on the local authority, and I see no reason for discrimination between Clauses 3 and 4 in this respect. In the second place, I should be inclined to widen the application of Clause 4 to other than urban areas if I were assured that there would be school accommodation within easy reach of every child. Thirdly, it might be worth while to see whether it would be well to associate with the management, say, three representative parents on the occasion of the final selection of teachers. I would call the attention of the President of the Board of Education to Clause 26, which provides for the devolution on the authorities for smaller areas within a county, down to the parish council, of certain functions to be carried out under the Bill. I am aware that questions in relation to the appointment, dismissal, and the salaries of teachers are withheld from the smaller areas. They are still to remain in the hands of the county authority. I think this devolution will have to be watched with extreme care. I cannot contemplate with equanimity such a proposal in connection with the question of the exemption of children from attendance for labour. Apart from these reasons there is the difficulty of rating in a parish on which these functions would devolve. Upon some places you would have to lay three rates—one for capital in respect of buildings, one in respect of the whole county education rate, and one for the duty devolved on them under Clause 26. My last point is in regard to Clause 7. There I do think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover was not quite fair, if I may say so. He called attention to Sub-section 4. I admit at once that if a non-provided school is closed what the Bill does under that sub-section is to give the teacher the privilege of contributing for one year to the Government superannuation fund at a time when he has not money to do so. Sub-section 3 does provide that in the case of a transferred school—and there will be many transferred—that a teacher must go with his school to the local authority. I hope my right hon. friend will be able to do something more than what is now provided in Section 7, Sub-section 4, for the teacher whose school may be closed. I make these suggestions in no spirit of opposition to the Bill, but because I am impatient of the clogging of the wheels of education in this country. I want to get on. What I desire is that the youth of this country may be so trained that they shall be adequate stewards of the great heritage which will fall into their hands.

LORD CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): I would venture to say a few words with regard to this most important, in fact this vital, question of education, and in intruding myself on the attention of hon. Members, I make no apology because I consider that it is incumbent upon anyone who can claim to belong to a section of the Christian Faith to do his utmost to resist a Bill of which the redeeming points are so hard to discover. It must be apparent to all that the Bill introduced by the Minister of Education has not been received with the general satisfaction which the enigmatical utterances of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite at the General Election led us to believe. The storm of indignation and protest which the speech of the right hon. Gentleman has excited in all parts of the country makes it obvious that there must be something radically wrong with the measure as proposed, and that to make it acceptable to the majority of the people, the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues must have regard to those religious instincts which mean so much to the character of a nation, and which it is obvious must be endangered if ever this Bill in its present form should become the law of the land. I approach this subject in no hostile spirit, and in fact, in no Party spirit. I approach it as one who is proud to belong to a denomination, and I ask no more for one denomination than for another; but I do ask that freedom should be accorded to all denominations, and that every child should have the opportunity of acquiring definite religious instruction as a part of its daily education. What is proposed by the Bill we are now discussing? It is proposed to invent, if I may use the expression, a new religion which for its sheer inadequacy will satisfy all sections of the Christian Faith; any further denominational instruction is to be treated as an extra, and so-called facilities are to be given in that respect. If all schools were the property of the State it might be said that this colourless religious instruction would be the only solution of the problem, as I for one maintain that anything would be preferable to entirely secular education. But it must be borne in mind that the majority of the schools have been built by Church people with the object of imparting definite religious instruction to the children of this country. That education should be a national concern, I feel no one will attempt to deny, and I maintain the Education Act of 1902 undertook this responsibility, and at the same time extended a helping hand to those religious bodies to whom we owe so much for present day education. It is impossible to claim perfection for any new measure, and the Act of 1902 was no exception to the rule. Bnt I maintain that if all sections of the community had combined in the patriotic desire to correct the few minor defects in that Act as regards the necessity for which we are all agreed, that measure would have been handed down to future generations as a measure supplying the educational and religious wants of all sections of the community. I do not wish to convey any impression that I am opposed to Nonconformity. I maintain that the same privileges should be extended to all denominations alike, and it is for this reason that I most strongly oppose a scheme which obviously favours one denomination. It is unfortunate that there are not enough schools in the country to satisfy the needs of all religious sections; but because one denomination is unfortunate in this respect it is a gross injustice that all other denominational schools should be forced to renounce their denominational character. I say "unfortunate" advisedly, because it was equally open to Nonconformists to build schools, but prior to the Act of 1870 they were content to take the advantages which were extended to all alike, and only asserted themselves when called upon to join in contributing to education as a national concern. As regards the views held by the President of the Board of Education, I find that in an article which the right hon. Gentleman published some two years ago in the *Independent Review*, he declared that there must be a compromise between the Anglicans and the Nonconformists, and he suggested the abolition of the Cowper-Temple Clause, which, he added, was all the Nonconformists had to give. But I have no wish to rake up the prehistoric utterances of the right hon. Gentleman, as I have every reason to believe that those ideas have undergone a very material change. But I would like to show that the right hon. Gentleman held the same views in January last when Minister of Education as he held two years ago, when he was a free and irresponsible Member of the Opposition. Speaking at Bristol on January 12th, the right hon. Gentleman said he was not only desirous that there should be Christian and Bible education in all schools, but he also wished that in all schools there should be facilities given, if they could be arranged on proper terms, whereby denominations should be free to instruct children in those schools in what they believed to be the true religion. I would like to know now what are actually the views of the right hon. Gentleman. He now appears to believe, if one can summarise his views, that the voluntary schools should be handed over without compromise to Dr. Clifford, and I think it can be said with truth that of all the extravagances of the present Government by far the most outrageous is the placing of Dr. Clifford by the present Bill on the rates. I can only imagine that this policy has been urged by the President of the Board of Trade and Dr. Clifford, and adopted as part of their policy by the Government at the demand of their followers. To my mind one of the most dangerous provisions of the Bill is the so-called abolition of tests for teachers, because in the future teachers need not profess any religion whatever; in fact, they may even be atheists if they choose. In every other branch of education no teacher would be allowed to instruct unless he were duly qualified to do so. Religious instruction is the most important part of a child's training, and yet there is to be allowed no safeguard that it is believed in by the teachers who impart it. It will be within the jurisdiction of the local authority to appoint a teacher who very likely has no belief in the religion he is called upon to impart. Moreover, the teacher may even refuse to give any religious instruction whatsoever, and the local authority will have no power to force him to do so, nor can they provide a qualified substitute. Amongst the many extraordinary provisions contained in the Bill the idea of giving Home Rule in Education to Wales must rank as one of the most extraordinary. Anyone who has watched the persecution of Anglican schools in Wales for the last three years—a persecution never denounced by the President of the Board of Trade—will realise what is likely to be their future. Let me give one instance. On July 1st and October 1st, 1905, 205 teachers in voluntary schools in Montgomeryshire were without salary. They would not have got it at all, nor would the voluntary school have been provided with coal or light, but for the operation of the Default Act, and the President of the Board of Trade will not deny that that is the case in other counties in Wales.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I deny it, and I ask the noble Lord to name a single other county.

*VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH: I am very glad the right hon. Gentleman can deny it; I spoke of Montgomeryshire because I know the facts I mentioned to be correct. I am one of those who maintain that denominational religious education is absolutely essential to the moral well-being of the individual. The fact that an individual belongs to a community professing one particular form of religion is to my mind a moral assistance, which must have an elevating effect, and I look with the gravest apprehension on a measure which is calculated to undermine this moral influence by the withdrawal of that definite religious form of instruction which has meant so much in the past and which is responsible for our present national integrity. It is asserted that the Church people have no cause to complain, that they will receive a fair rent, and that they may look upon these efforts as a commercial success, for they will receive a good return for their money. Whilst strongly deprecating any infringement of the rights of property, I would venture to point out to those who assert that Church people will be well paid for the sacrifices they have made and the money they have spent in the earnest endeavour to promote that definite religious instruction which they themselves believe to be essential to the well-being of the children of the country, that no remuneration whatever can be adequate when the obvious prospect is that the future generation will grow up with a merely defined sense of the difference between right and wrong, but with no such definite form of religious faith as has always been in the past, and will ever be in the future, the mainstay of every right-thinking individual.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (No. 2) BILL.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that he did not think that after a Minister of the Crown had moved the adjournment of the House on a Bill of the kind they had been discussing the Government ought to take any further opposed business. His hon. friends who were Members of the last Parliament would remember that the practice was, that when the main debate of the evening stood adjourned under such circumstances, no further contentious business was proceeded with. Of course they should not desire that a right hon. Gentleman of the importance of the President of the Board of Trade should divide his speech, but he thought that it was a corollary to their consenting to the adjournment of the debate that no important business should be taken.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Balfour.*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn," put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at five minutes before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 8*th May*, 1906.

The Lord Shute (*V. Barrington*) took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions.)

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Crellin's Patents Bill [H.L.]. Presented (pursuant to leave given yesterday), and read 1^a.

Ritz Hotel Bill [H.L.]. Presented (pursuant to leave given yesterday); read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Manchester Churches Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Orders made on the 22nd of March and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed.

Folkestone and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committes informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Orders made on the 29th of March and Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed.

Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with amendments.

Millwall Dock Bill. Reported, without Amendment.

Hull and Barnsley Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Havana United Railways and Regla Warehouses Bill [H.L.]; North Metropolitan Tramways Bill; Hull and Barnsley and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Scottish Provident Institution Buildings Bill [H.L.]. Committed.

Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over To-morrow.

Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]—(Petition for additional Provision). Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next.

Carlisle Corporation Bill; Todmorden Corporation Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Bacup Corporation Bill; Cardiff Gas Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

North East Lincolnshire Water Bill; Thornton Urban District Gas Bill; New Mills Urban District Council Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Uxbridge Gas Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

H. R. Baines & Company Bill [H.L.]; Vauclain's Patent Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Great Yarmouth Waterworks and Lowestoft Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L.] and other Bills do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Great Yarmouth Waterworks, and Lowestoft Water and Gas Bill [H.L.], and the Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to. All petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of maintenance of existing religious teaching in Church of England schools — of parents and guardians of children attending schools at Worsley; Manchester (2); Astley (2); West Houghton (2); St. Marks; Monton; Eccles; Swinton; Farington; Hoole; Darwen (2); Goosnagh; Blackpool; Blackburn (2). Of teachers in schools in Westhoughton (3); Eccles; Swinton; Astley; Glodwick; Swinton; Hoole; Blackpool; Lytham; Darwen; Goosnagh; Blackburn (2). Read and ordered to lie on the Table.

POISONS AND PHARMACY BILL [H.L.]

Petitions for amendment of; of persons signing; in Loughboro'; Lincoln; Nottingham; Sheffield. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (SPECIAL REPORTS ON EDUCATIONAL SUBJECTS).

Volume 16. School Training for the Home Duties of Women. Part II. Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, and France.

ALIENS ACT, 1905.

Return of alien passengers brought to the United Kingdom from ports in Europe or within the Mediterranean Sea during the three months ending 31st March 1906, together with the number of expulsion orders made during that period requiring aliens to leave the United Kingdom.

TRADE REPORTS—MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

No. 649. Gold Mines of Formosa.

ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3579. Persia (Arabistan).

No. 3580. Netherlands (Java).

No. 3581. Persia (Bushire).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LUNACY.

Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the visitors of lunatics from the 1st October, 1905, to the 31st March, 1906. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee, that they have added the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell, the Lord Granard (*E. Granard*) and the Lord Fitzmaurice to the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

POISONS AND PHARMACY BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with further Amendments. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House and by the Standing Committee to be received on Friday next, and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 76.)

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee without further Amendments. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House to be received on Thursday next.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS (REGISTRATION OF PATENT AGENTS) BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments; and to be printed as amended. (No. 77.)

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment; and to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

SOLICITORS BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

STANDING ORDERS RELATING TO PRIVATE BILLS.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The EARL of ONSLOW): My Lords, this is an Amendment of the Standing Orders relating to generating stations for electrical purposes. There is considerable apprehension on the part of His Majesty's Office of Works that the erection of these enormously powerful generating stations may have a serious effect upon some of the national collections, and possibly even upon some of the public parks; and under those circumstances they desire that your Lordship's House and the other House of Parliament should amend the Standing Orders, so that before any Bill authorising the erection of generating stations is passed they may have the opportunity of reporting upon it, and the Committee considering the Bill may have that Report in front of them, before they agree to recommend that the Bill be passed into law.

Moved, that Standing Orders No. 106, be amended by inserting after "trade" in line 4, "and His Majesty's Office of Works."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Standing Orders amended accordingly, and to be printed as amended. (No. 78.)

LOCAL TAXATION.

*The Earl of DENBIGH rose "To call attention to the present system of local taxation, whereby the greater part of the accumulated wealth of the country contributes comparatively little to local charges; and to the system of compounding whereby a large number of those who elect the local authorities are insufficiently informed as to their share in the growing burdens imposed upon the ratepayers."

The noble Earl said: My Lords, Your Lordships will remember that in 1896 a very important Royal Commission was appointed for the purpose of considering the great and complex question of local taxation, and that after a certain number of interim Reports, the final one was issued in 1901 after the Commission had taken a great deal of evidence, and gone into the whole history of the subject and its working in a most minute and exhaustive way. A considerable number of recommendations were made, but I do not know that any one of them has been acted upon, except that which dealt with clerical tithes. The question of local taxation is always with us, and it is daily becoming more and more acute. I do not know that there is anything people grumble more at than the steady and constant rise in the rates. I should like, by way of emphasising that fact, to call your Lordships' attention to a few figures. Looking at the rates from the point of view of the average increment per annum, I find that in the year 1881–1882, compared with six years before, the average increment per annum was £548,000. In the year 1890–1, compared with eight years before, the annual increment was £1,515,000. In the year 1902–3, compared with 1899–1900, the average increment was £2,398,000, and the increase of 1902–3 over 1901–2 was £3,888,834. Then, again, look at the increase in local expenditure. The total expenditure for 1902–3 was no less a figure than £128,968,743 in England and Wales alone, and if you take the amount of loans into consideration as well—and, after all, these loans are an annually recurring figure and it is perfectly fair to take them into the calculation of the annual expenditure—the full amount equals between £150,000,000 and £160,000,000, or rather more than the national expenditure. The population, between the years 1898 and 1903 increased by 5·9 per cent.; the rateable value by 13·3 per cent., but the public rates increased by 33·8 per cent., whilst the loans of the local authorities rose by no less than 41·5 per cent.

I think these figures make one reflect on this matter. At the same time, it is curious to observe the general ignorance of the complexities and details of this great question outside the ranks of those whom I will call professionals and experts. The ordinary individual very rarely studies the question at all, and confines his observations and thought on the subject of rating to language of a more or less emphatic kind when the rate collector calls with his demand note. I daresay that comparatively few people realise what I pointed out to your Lordships a moment ago, that the total local expenditure is very considerably in excess of the national expenditure. Of the total annual local expenditure of £152,000,000 nearly £58,000,000 is raised by rates, £16,246,000 by Government contributions, and £40,000,000 by loans. Then water, gas, trams, tolls, and the various side shows and speculations indulged in by the municipal authorities of a more or less lucrative character, such as river steamboats and the like, bring in £36,000,000 gross, out of which you have to deduct the working expenses and provide many millions for interest and sinking fund on the enormous total of local loans, which amounted three years ago—the last date in respect of which figures are available—to £437,000,000.

I would like to point out that the total of £152,000,000 in 1902–3 is nearly double the figure for 1892–3, ten years previously, when the total was £82,000,000. The £58,000,000 raised by rates every year is nearly double the amount raised ten years before, when it was £34,700,000, but the Government contributions from the Exchequer for local relief only vary to this extent, that they are £16,246,000 now as against £10,600,000 ten years ago. We have heard a great deal in past years of the increase in national expenditure and how that has been responsible for much of the slackness of trade and want of employment in the country, and the platforms frequented by noble Lords opposite have re-echoed during the past year with denunciations of the expenditure of the late Government, to which has been mainly attributed the existence of the unemployed problem in a somewhat acute form. But it is rather curious that, with the exception of a general growl, one very rarely sees an accusation on this point raised as regards the increasing rates. I suggest to the House that if it is true, as no doubt it is, that money taken in taxation from a man reduces the amount available by him for the purposes of employment, it is only a question of detail whether you take the money for national or local purposes.

I have no intention of going into the general question, because it is a very large one indeed, and if I had the hardihood or ability to attempt it, I am afraid I should have to emulate the example of the Deputy in the Hungarian Parliament, who spoke for over twenty-four consecutive hours just to keep the ball rolling in regard to the subject under discussion. I hasten to say that I only propose merely touching the fringe of the subject. I shall deal more especially with two particular aspects of the question to which much attention is being directed. The reference which I have on the Paper as to whether the general wealth of the country pays a proper share of taxation deals, of course, with that much argued point as to whether realty should pay as much as it does to local taxation: in other words, whether a man should be rated more with regard to the premises which he occupies than with regard to his general ability to pay.

There is a very interesting history of the subject given in the Report of the Royal Commission at which I would invite your Lordships to glance for a moment. After the dissolution of the monasteries the parish was recognised as the unit of area for the collection of money for the relief of the poor, and for a time contributions were voluntary; but, at the same time, the local bishop was empowered to employ pressure which nowadays would come under the description of "peaceful persuasion," and if the parishioners did not contribute according to their ability they were sent to prison. Then in 1601 came the great Act of Elizabeth, which is the foundation of our rating system. Payments to the Poor Fund were made obligatory, according to the ability of the parish or locality to pay. The idea at that time seems to have been that this contribution should take the form of a sort of local income-tax, but there was no general method for ascertaining a man's income. There was a great deal of legal controversy as to whether a man was rateable in respect of his stock-in-trade and other personal property, and a variety of decisions were given to which it is unnecessary for me to refer; but towards the end of the eighteenth century the rating of stock-in-trade was certainly practised in the cloth and woollen districts of the south and west of England. The result of that was to destroy these local industries, and to compel them to migrate to other parts where they were not so rated, a course which is taking place to-day in regard to many of our large industries.

The crisis arrived in 1839, when it was definitely decided that stock-in-trade was assessable for local taxation. So much dissatisfaction was caused that a special Act was passed in 1840 for the purpose of exempting all personalty and stock-in-trade. It was to remain in force until the end of 1842, and it is interesting to note that the Commission call attention to the fact that this Act is kept in force now by the Expiring Laws Continuance Act which comes before Parliament every year. You know well that as modern requirements increased and society developed it was felt to be very unjust that real property should bear the entire burden of maintaining services necessary and beneficial to the whole community, and a system of grants-in-aid and subventions was gradually introduced, which was afterwards changed in 1888 by the Act passed by the noble Viscount Lord Goschen when he substituted for that a system of what is known as assigned revenues. Other revenues were assigned in 1890, and in the year 1902–3 £16,000,000 came from these revenues as against £58,000,000 raised in rates.

I have heard it said that the noble Viscount's system does not work perhaps quite as well as he had anticipated. I have seen accusations against it that it has introduced a complexity into accounts which none but an expert can deal with, and that it wants reconsidering. I will not venture to express any opinion on that question in the presence of the noble Viscount himself, although possibly the matter may be referred to by other noble Lords in this debate. However, the broad aspect of the question is that in spite of what has been done, and in spite of the great difficulty which the Royal Commission admits exists of finding the true relation of personalty to realty, the Report emphatically states that non-rateable property does not as yet bear anything like its full share for those public services which can be regarded as more national than local. Then the Report deals more minutely with the question, and states that poor relief comprising the various services administered by boards of guardians and the police, and criminal prosecutions, are certainly national matters. They state that education is national in a high degree, and that the main roads are becoming more and more national in view of the increasing mobility of the population and the invention of new methods of locomotion.

There are some interesting Tables set out in the Report. Although we are cautioned to use them with the very greatest care and not to generalise too much from them, still they give some very useful information on the relative positions of personalty and realty in this country. There is a Table on page 15 which deals with taxes incidental to the ownership, occupation, and transfer of property. As regards Imperial finance the amount chargeable to rateable property is 17·6 of the whole, and to non-rateable property 21·4 of the whole. But, my Lords, when you come to local finance the position is very much reversed. On rateable property the percentage is 82·8 of the whole, and on non-rateable property—that is, personalty—it is only 6·1 of the whole. Then there is another interesting Table on page 20 of the Report, which shows the amount of the different descriptions of property coming under the Death Duties, with a view of establishing some idea of the proportions of real and personal property in this country. This Table points out that in the three years 1898, 1899, and 1900, out of the total duty that was paid, 75 per cent. was on personalty and only about 25 per cent. on realty, showing that the amount of personal property is apparently very much in excess of real property.

Without going more into detail, I would like to draw the especial attention of the House to what the Commissioners state. They state that for national purposes people should be taxed more with regard to their ability to pay. What the Commission consider a just grievance they say cannot be remedied without a direct contribution from the Exchequer, or an extension or development of the system of assigned revenues as brought in by the noble Viscount in 1888. I wish to draw the especial attention of noble Lords opposite to this matter, because I consider it has become really pressing in view of the Government's proposals to tax land values. That will be a subject for separate debate, and I am, therefore, not going into it to-day. I am not going to argue whether or not the expected revenue will be obtained, nor whether the tax which they anticipate putting on will not ultimately fall on the occupier in places where there is competition to obtain houses. But this fact is perfectly clear, that on whomsoever it falls it is an additional tax on real property, and, therefore, any dealing with that question without considering the whole question of rating is fundamentally unjust in view of the Report of the Royal Commission that real property already bears far more than its just proportion of local, but at the same time really national burdens. I cannot do better than call your Lordships' attention to what was said on this matter by the noble Earl whose absence we deplore so much—Lord Spencer. The noble Earl spoke last year on this question, and he was very strong indeed against touching it without dealing with the whole question of rating. He condemned what he called "peddling and tinkering" with the matter, a course to which he said he had the greatest possible objection.

I now wish to direct the attention of the House to another matter which has excited great interest all over the country amongst actual ratepayers—I refer to the system known as compounding, under which an owner of property below a certain value either arranges voluntarily, or is compelled by the local authority to make himself responsible for the rates which he includes in his rent. He hands over that amount to the local authority less a certain commission or composition which is allowed him for his trouble and risk in collecting. It was stated before the Commission that something like from two-thirds to three-fourths of the owners of property in the Metropolis pay rates direct, and in these cases the actual amount of the rates is never brought under the notice of the occupiers who have the voting power. Not only is there the case of small properties under the compounding limit when the system can be enforced by the local authority, but the system also holds good in the many flats and tenements which are springing up all over London and our large cities, and in which the tenant pays a rent inclusive of rates and outgoings. There is no denying the fact that this is a very convenient system. It saves a great deal of trouble to the local authorities, and it makes them more secure as to the rates than if they had to be collected individually from small occupiers, many of whom in the poorer districts live from hand to mouth and are given to perpetrating what are known as "moonlight flits" whenever it is likely to be financially inconvenient for them to pay their rent.

Compounding is also very popular with many landlords. As I have pointed out, they allow for the full rates which they collect, but they can receive a composition up to 30 per cent. according to the conditions arranged for. That is a considerable advantage to the landlords, but it is a great loss to the rates of the district. There are two systems. For the poor rate compounding is only enforced by the local authority in the case of properties of a certain valuation laid down by the Poor Rate Assessment and Collection Act, 1869, and the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882. For the general district rate compounding is frequently regulated by means of local Acts. Lord Spencer referred last year, in the speech to which I have already alluded, to an eloquent speech by Mr. Gladstone, who defended compounding on the score of convenience; but Lord Spencer spoke very strongly, and pointed out how necessary it was that all electors should take an interest in, and full responsibility for, the public services. He said that it was a very serious matter indeed that hundreds of thousands of electors did not know how much of their rent went in the payment of rates. Here is an extract from the evidence given by the late Lord Farrer. Lord Farrer said—

> "Facility of collection is no doubt a great advantage to a governing body. But this facility should not be such as to make the taxpayer unconscious of the burden. Otherwise a great security for economy and good administration is lost. Those who pay the piper call the tune, and in calling the tune they should not only pay the piper but feel that they pay him."

I do not think the point could be put better than that.

I suggest to your Lordships that this is not a Party matter. I have seen the strongest condemnation of the present working of the compounding system in some of the most advanced organs which support His Majesty's present Government. This is a question upon which both Parties can meet. I do not think that the desire for good and sound administration, the desire that people should be certain that they get proper value for their money, and the desire to make those having the voting power appreciate more the duties and responsibilities of citizenship—I do not think that these desires can be called the perquisite of any one Party. As matters stand, a great many ratepayers never see the rate collector from one year's end to the other. They never realise what the expenditure is. I do not suppose the majority of them even know what the rate in the pound is which is levied in their district; but when they have to face an increase in the rent owing to a rise in the rates they simply put it down to the grasping rapacity of the landlord.

I think there is a remedy for this state of things, but I believe the only possible remedy is to be found in the lowering of the compounding limit and having a more uniform system than prevails at the present moment. In London the compounding limit is £20, in Liverpool it is £13, and in Birmingham and Manchester £10. In other places throughout the country I think it is £8, but there is no reason at all why these limits should not be reduced so as to compel direct rating in a great many more cases than at present. It is not possible, I believe, to do away with compounding altogether, because in the case of very cheap and small occupations the amount, if collected weekly, fortnightly, or monthly, would be so small as to make the direct collection of it impracticable, and the abolition of compounding altogether would cause great loss on the rates by reason of the number of defaulters. But, at the same time, the loss would not be so great as is imagined, for although collecting direct from small occupiers would mean a great deal more clerical work and more collectors, yet you would save the large amount of money which is now lost to the ratepayers through the composition allowance to landlords who pay direct.

I have had an interesting correspondence with a gentleman at Manchester, who deals rather exhaustively with the question, and he sends me some figures with regard to North and South Manchester, excluding the central portion of the city. He points out that the rateable value is £1,760,000. The compounding property represents a rateable value of £441,000, or 25 per cent. of the whole, and the composition allowed to the landlords is £31,600, which sum is therefore lost to the ratepayers. This gentleman makes a suggestion which is well worthy of consideration. He calculates that if there were 160 more collectors, and they were told off to collect from 500 houses each, the work could be done, and after paying them and allowing for loss from defaulters, he works out that there would be a balance of £15,000 for the benefit of the rates. I think there is a good deal in that suggestion, and I do not see why it should not be carried out in those localities where a high rate of composition is allowed at the present moment.

Then there is another suggestion, that landlords should be compelled by law to show the rate separate from the rent on the demand note when they collect their rents. This movement is beginning. I have here two sample cards designed for the purpose of showing the rent and the rate to be collected, and I think that if that were done generally it would at all events bring home to the occupiers the exact amount of the rate they were paying, and show how much of what they paid was rent and how much went to the rating authority. It would have to be made obligatory. It would, of course, put landlords and their agents and collectors to a certain amount of extra trouble, and, therefore, there is no hope of expecting it to be carried out generally unless it is ordered by statute, and I do not see any reason why that should not be done.

Before I conclude I should like to point out one great anomaly that exists at the present moment, though it has really no place among the subjects of which I gave notice. I allude to the extent to which limited companies are rated, and the fact that they are not allowed a single vote in regard to the administration of the money which they have to pay. There has been a huge development in joint stock enterprise of recent years. In 1894 the capital of limited companies believed to be carrying on business in this country amounted to £1,000,000,000. In 1904 the amount was nearly double, and reached £1,900,000,000. Of course, it is impossible to exactly estimate the amount of rates paid by limited companies, but railways alone pay from £5,000,000 to £6,000,000 in rates, a tax which works out at something like £273 per mile per annum. That can only be regarded as a very great burden. It is a very great injustice that they should have to pay this amount and that none of these companies should have a single voice in the administration of it. The present system is a relic handed down to us from days gone by, when joint stock enterprise had not become the great feature it is to-day of commercial conditions. I contend that this is a matter which ought to be considered in connection with the rating question, for it seems unjust that the present system should be allowed to continue.

There were some interesting figures published last year with regard to rating in Holborn. The rates raised by the Holborn Borough Council for the year ended March 31st, 1905, amounted to £341,296. Of that amount £97,400, or 28·53 per cent. of the total rate, was payable in respect of premises in the occupation of limited liability companies, public authorities, hospitals, hotels, and other premises in respect of which no names appeared upon the register of electors. In contrast to this, of the total number of names upon the current register—11,979—no less than 6,712, or 56·03 per cent. do not themselves pay rates; the rates are paid by their landlords. Lord Spencer, in the speech last July to which I have already referred, said—

> "A curious instance was brought to my notice recently in the case of the Borough of Holborn. Figures were quoted showing that more than one-fourth of the sum paid in rates in that borough was paid by companies which had no voting power whatever, and that, on the other hand, more than half of the registered voters paid no rates at all. Therefore, people who paid the rates do not vote, and people who do not pay have votes. Direct taxation is the best way of showing the electors whether there is good government, and I wish sincerely that something could be done by Act of Parliament to alter the present system."

It should not be impossible to devise some more just system. I have no doubt that one of the criticisms which will be made by noble Lords who may speak from the benches opposite will be, Why did not your Party deal with this question when they were in power? I believe there were reasons for that. However, I have no doubt that point will be dealt with by the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition. Probably there were excellent reasons for not dealing with it. Doubtless, one of them was the important consideration to which the Commission calls attention—that you cannot deal with the question of further subventions and equalising the amount paid by realty and personalty without heavy expense, and I believe the money was not available. Still I cannot help regretting that compounding was not dealt with.

But this question has become much more acute than it was even last year. Rates are rising in an alarming way, and although I have said that this is no Party question, and that I believe the members of His Majesty's Government are as anxious as we are for sound economy and sound administration, there is no disguising the fact that there are a large number of the supporters of the Government who are notorious for their desire to spend public money in every sort of enterprise and are not particularly careful as to whether they get proper value for that money or not. The knowledge of that fact has undoubtedly created very considerable alarm in the minds of the ratepayers of this country. I suggest to your Lordships that it is high time that this question was dealt with. If His Majesty's Government are really and sincerely anxious to see the question of local rating put upon an equitable basis, if they wish to see sound administration and proper economy, they should find time to deal with it even though they have other large and important questions on their hands at the present moment. I apologise for having detained the House so long and thank your Lordships for listening to me so patiently.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, the noble Earl who has just sat down very rightly said that this is a great and complex question, and I think I can congratulate him on a most excellent and interesting speech showing great knowledge and grasp of the subject. I ask for the indulgence of the House in venturing to say a few words on this question, because I know that I am speaking in the presence of many noble Lords who have forgotten more on the subject than I ever knew, and fifteen years experience on the London County Council has taught me that the more you think the question over the more difficult it seems to become. I also have to thank the noble Earl for acknowledging that the question is not a Party question. We on this side of the House are grateful to him for that statement, and we shall look with confidence to the kindly co-operation, sympathy, and help of the noble Earl opposite and his friends when we come to deal with this question.

The noble Earl put the whole matter very plainly. He gave us to understand that local taxation could be well described in this way: A, B, and C occupy similar properties; A and B may be much richer than C, but they all pay the same amount of rates, based on the annual value of the property they occupy and without any reference to the difference in their incomes. When the Final Report of the Royal Commission was issued we plunged into it to see if by hook or by crook A and B could be made to fairly and properly contribute according to their ability. On page 13 there is a suggestion that perhaps a local income-tax might help us. The Commissioners state—

> "The Elizabethan poor rate was perhaps originally intended to be something like a local income-tax, and the practice of rating on 'means and substance,' which continued in some parts of Scotland down to our time, was very similar."

But they go on to say—

> "It is, however, clear on reflection that a local income tax—*i.e.*, an income tax imposed and levied by local authorities within their own district—tends more and more to be incompatible with modern social and political arrangements."

Therefore we are face to face with this, that a local income-tax will not work. The Report states that a tax on the incomes of the inhabitants would be more burdensome and less productive than the present rates, and that instances of the chaos that would ensue might be indefinitely multiplied. It is clear, therefore, that the first suggestion will not help us in the least and that it can be dismissed.

It is said that one method of attaining results similar to those desired by the advocates of a local income-tax is the imposition of a special local rate on inhabited houses. But we find that there are very serious objections to this suggestion as well. A rate on dwelling houses would fall rather unfairly on a householder with a family for which ample accommodation is required, as compared with unmarried persons in receipt of a similar income. Therefore we have to dismiss the suggestion as to an inhabited house rate. Those are the only two suggestions that I can find in the Final Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. On page 14 of the Report we find a definite proposal to the effect that State assistance in some form is necessary. The Report states—

> "We are driven to the conclusion that the grievances which we have set forth cannot be remedied without either a direct contribution from the Exchequer or the extension and development of the system of assigned revenues which has been in existence since 1889."

That is the conclusion at which the Royal Commission arrived.

I now come to the second matter touched upon by the noble Earl—the question of compounding. Lord Denbigh's contention, as I understand it, is that if the persons whose rates are now compounded for paid them direct to the rating authority local administration would become less extravagant. We have been told that over and over again, and I suppose there is something in it. Last week a discussion took place in your Lordships' House with regard to the alleged extravagance of the Poplar Board of Guardians, and Lord Balfour of Burleigh criticised them severely for having, in their Poor Law Schools, constructed a staircase of teak and installed a roof beam which would not, he said, disgrace the finest cathedral in England. The noble Lord said he had also been informed by a correspondent that a further sum of £50,000 had been unnecessarily spent on the building. The absence of an efficient check on local expenditure is, according to Lord Balfour, largely due to what is called the vicious system of compounding.

I remember what happened in the case of the compound householder in 1866 and 1867. The Representation of the People Act of 1867 was generally known in the country as "Disraeli's leap in the dark." They went to the country, and the result of the "leap in the dark" was that Mr. Gladstone came into power with as large a majority as we have at present. It was then discovered that there were 700,000 persons in this country who lived in houses under £10. Their rates were not allowed to be compounded for. They had to pay them direct, and the difficulties of the authorities were very great in consequence. In October, 1867, there were 25,000 persons summoned in Birmingham, and in May, 1868, there were 15,000 persons summoned in the same city, 5,000 distress warrants being issued. In London the difficulty was as great as in the country. In Bethnal Green and also in Mile End there were 15,000 summonses; in Hackney, 6,000; and in Lambeth 5,000. So great was the inconvenience that Viscount Goschen, who I believe was President of the Poor Law Board at that time, brought in a Bill in 1869 to restore compounding. Powers of compounding were then reintroduced, and have remained exercisable ever since.

It is difficult to know what is best to be done. I would point out that a man who lives in a house rented at four pounds a year would, if the rates were increased one penny in the pound, only have to pay 4d. a year more. I do not think that would be any great hardship, and I doubt whether such an increase would constitute an effective inducement to a ratepayer to look more closely into local affairs. The remedy suggested by the noble Earl, that the compounding rate should be lowered, does not agree with the Report of the Royal Commission. Lord Balfour, who was very severe in his criticism of this vicious principle, states in this Report that it could not be abolished, and he goes on to recommend that the rate should be raised. The noble Earl and Lord Balfour certainly do not see eye to eye in the matter.

The Royal Commission recommends a direct contribution from the Exchequer. I must remind the House that that was in 1901, and that things are very different now from what they were then. Without trespassing on any controversial ground, I may remind the House that the National expenditure, which in 1904 was £94,000,000, is now £145,000,000. So that it is less easy at the present to find the £3,000,000 which I believe would be necessary for this purpose. The income-tax stands at 1s. in the £, and it is somewhat difficult to raise these large sums suddenly, however necessary they may be. I may be asked, are the Liberal Party, now that they are in power, going to offer a *non possumus*? I am not able to make any definite statement in the name of my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board, but I can assure the noble Earl who preceded me that Lord Spencer's words will be fully and entirely acted up to. I can assure the House that there will be no peddling and tinkering with the matter, and that when it is taken in hand it will be dealt with in a comprehensive manner, and the Government will recognise the greatness of the task they have undertaken. I need only say, in conclusion, that the Government are pledged to consider this question of local taxation at an early date, and in their opinion that reform should begin with valuation.

* THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I feel that the House owes a debt of gratitude to the noble Earl who introduced this subject to our notice to-night, and I confess to some trepidation in venturing to say even a few words upon a question which has may intricacies into which I do not propose to enter, because I am incompetent to deal with them; but I do desire to say a word or two upon one branch of the subject, quite limited in its scope, but of supreme importance to the general welfare of the poorest classes in our urban population.

It has been implied in the speech of the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture, that Lord Denbigh, in introducing the subject, was deprecating in a special way the extravagance of some local authorities with regard to expenditure which falls upon the rates. I did not quite understand the noble Earl to press that point; but, if it is pressed, I should not be prepared to follow in that direction. I believe there have been instances in which the expenditure of the local authorities, both urban and rural, has been somewhat reckless, but I put that as nothing compared with the advantage that very often has accrued from expenditure which has been denounced at the time as extravagant, but in the long run has proved to be the truest and highest possible economy, because of the improvement it has brought about in the lives of those on whose behalf the expenditure was incurred. Such things have taken place constantly in London. For example, the provision of open spaces, the adoption of the Libraries Act, and the provision of baths and washhouses are extremely expensive undertakings, but the expenditure will ultimately prove to have been of the wisest and best possible kind. Therefore, I do not follow any one who bases all his objections on the ground of possible extravagance on the part of local authorities.

The single point upon which I desire to dwell for a moment is the educative advantage which comes from the tenant paying his rates direct instead of under the system of compounding. It was touched upon by the noble Earl, Lord Denbigh, but he did not dwell upon it in any detail. There are in all our great cities, and, above all, in London, landlords and land lords. A great many landlords are striving to the best of their power to enable their tenants to rise to the highest level of citizenship of which they are capable. One of the largest landowners in London is the body known as the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners have for many years administered the greater part of their urban properties under the guidance and management of a lady who is known all the world over for her efforts in this direction — Miss Octavia Hill. Miss Octavia Hill is most keen and eager on this subject of compounding, and for this reason. Those who are striving to arouse in the people intelligence in public affairs, and a sense of responsibility in regard to local expenditure, are met on every side with the difficulty which arises from the law which renders it at all events possible, and in ordinary circumstances usual, that the tenant knows nothing whatever about the rates which he has to pay, or the way in which they are ultimately expended.

In London at this moment there are twenty-nine boroughs, and I think I am right in saying that twelve of them make it absolutely compulsory on the owner of property that he shall, whether he wishes to or not, allow his tenants to compound for the payment of the rates. The tenant naturally takes little or no interest in the way in which the rates are expended, because it makes no difference to him whether the rates are high or low; at any rate, he does not find it out if it does. There are many parts of England in which this power of compounding is rarely used, and I think it will be found, if statistics are forthcoming, that in those districts where the occupier pays his rates directly there is infinitely greater interest taken in public affairs than there is in regions where compounding is practised on a large scale.

I had to look the other day into a question connected with the borough of Burnley. In that borough a few years ago there was practically little or no compounding, and I believe I am right in saying that in the municipal elections something like 93 or 94 per cent. of the possible voters at the local elections went to the poll. Contrast that with some of our London boroughs. I lived for some years in the borough of Southwark. In that borough at the present moment about 35 per cent. of the electors go to the poll on the occasion of the election of the borough council, and some 50 per cent. on the occasion of the county council election. But general interest in these elections is absolutely lacking, and I believe that to be attributable in no small degree to the fact that by far the larger proportion of the people who occupy tenements and houses in these regions pay the rates only through what they regard as an additional impost by the landlord.

I admit that, while the present system of quarterly payments of rates is adhered to, there are practical difficulties in the way of collecting the rates directly from the poorest occupiers. It is not to be expected that a man or woman who is struggling with poverty will be able to keep untouched the growing pile of pence or shillings reserved for rates so as to be able to have the sum ready when the quarter ends. But in the poorest districts rents are collected weekly or fortnightly, and there ought to be no insuperable difficulty in collecting the rates in the same way. We are told that the expense of such collection would be prohibitive. I do not believe it. It is possible at this moment to get rents collected in the poorest districts for an expenditure on commission of 5 per cent, and these rents are probably collected in large measure from scattered houses in different parts of a neighbourhood. The authorities give a commission of from 15 to 30 per cent. for the collection of the rates when the person collecting them happens to be the landlord. You would have that money in hand in considering the extra expense involved in a fortnightly collection of rates direct from the tenant, and such collection becomes, of course, both easier and cheaper when you can collect from house to house or room to room instead of from scattered tenants.

Those who are accustomed to the administration of large property, where there is a philanthropic element in the matter, and who are forced by the necessities of the case to adopt the compounding system, endeavour to educate the people by collecting separately the money required as rent and the money required in payment of rates. They have not found an insuperable difficulty in doing so, and experts have told me that there would probably be a large saving to local authorities if this were carried out on an extensive scale. I know that evidence to the contrary was given by official witnesses before the Royal Commission, and I do not wish to undervalue their testimony. But, after all, they were looking at it from one side only, and in any case it is almost inexcusable that in twelve metropolitan boroughs compounding should be made compulsory. In sixteen it is a voluntary arrangement, and every encouragement is given to its adoption. Yet it must always be remembered that the system gives full encouragement to landlords whose only desire is to get the utmost commercial value for their property. These landlords, when the rates go up 1d., add 2d. or 3d. to the rent, and there are districts in which it is positively said to be a gain rather than a loss to the landlord that the rates should go up. I would strongly urge that Clause 4 of the Act of 1869 which enables a local authority to make compounding compulsory, should be repealed, and that the system of voluntary compounding should be discouraged and reduced to a minimum. The slipshod, careless, shiftless tenant likes the plan, but it is in the highest degree discouraging to those landlords who are striving to improve the understanding capacity of those from whom they draw their rents and to increase their sense of civic responsibility.

*LORD ZOUCHE OF HARYNGWORTH: My Lords, I rise with great diffidence to address a few words to the House on this important subject, especially after the extremely able speakers who have preceded me. There are, however, one or two points that I should like to bring forward, and I can claim some knowledge of the subject as I served on the Joint Committee on Municipal Trading. The question of municipal trading is not precisely the same as the one we are discussing to-day, but it is in some measure germane to it. Abundant evidence was given before the

Joint Committee to which I have referred of the extravagance, and, I am afraid, the somewhat reckless extravagance, of various local bodies. Sometimes they were county councils, at other times they were borough and other councils, but the result in each case was to handicap very seriously local industries.

The noble Earl who initiated this discussion referred to the question whether the accumulated wealth of the country contributes its fair share to local charges, and he seemed to hint at the rating of personal property. The noble Earl shakes his head. I evidently misunderstood him. This question has often been before the public, and I protest with all the strength of which I am capable against an idea of enlarging the field of local taxation by the inclusion of personal property which would only result in increasing the rates. The theory is that at present one man, so to speak, supports a burden, and that if another supporter is introduced that burden will be lessened. On the contrary, the inevitable result would be to double it. As to the question of compounding, I should like to add my humble testimony to what has been said about the abuse of this system. We know that compounding was started as a matter of convenience, and a rebate was allowed the landlord as an inducement for him to carry out this arrangement; but I must admit that compounding, when it is associated with large rebates, does not seem to me to be a businesslike arrangement.

I have in my hand a table showing the amounts allowed by metropolitan borough councils to owners of property in respect of compounding. In Poplar the allowances for collection were in 1904 no less a sum that £30,195, and for the year 1906–7 the amount is estimated at £37,000, which I am informed is equivalent to a rate of 1s. in the pound on the whole of the rateable value of the borough. So that, if you balance one thing against the other, I do not think there is very much gained by allowing these large rebates as an inducement or bribe to owners of property to collect the rates. I do not think it can be pointed out too strongly that as a result of this system the compounding householders never see the rate collector, and most of them do not know how they are assessed. Yet they have votes at municipal elections, and their votes are often sufficient to swamp those of the actual ratepayers directly interested in checking extravagant expenditure.

The people whose rates are included in their rents are as a rule more open to agitation than those who pay rates direct, and can often be induced to vote for municipal councillors who represent that they have done much for the community without asking these voters for a penny. If the matter is thought over, it will be seen that many of these councillors are in an almost impregnable position. Theoretically they are subject to the votes of the ratepayers, but it is exceedingly difficult to turn them out. Sometimes this has a rather extraordinary result. One of the witnesses before the Joint Committee to which I have referred was the town clerk of a large and important city which shall be nameless. He was detailing the various ways in which they managed their business, and he admitted the enormous extent of the local taxation. At the conclusion of his evidence he added, with as near an approach to a wink as the august surroundings would permit, that the corporation did pretty much as he told them; so that the result of the system is that the expenditure of a whole city may be in the hands of one individual.

It is said that these people pay rates in their rent, but that is not always true, because the rent very often does not depend entirely on the rates. There are places, in which there is not a large demand for houses, where the landlord cannot recoup himself by raising rents. But in some places and in London the landlord is able to increase the rent, and I think the point brought forward by the most rev. Primate is an important one, that great hardship is being inflicted on poor people by their being charged rents higher than are necessary to cover the rates. A man who never sees the rate collector has no possible interest in bringing his influence to bear in reducing the rates, and if he is of the working class he will possibly favour undue expenditure because he thinks it will bring him more labour and extra wages. It is difficult to know what ought to be done to remedy this state of affairs. The fairest remedy is that municipal votes should be confined to those who actually pay rates. Taxation and representation should go together. It may be a drastic remedy to disfranchise those who do not pay rates; but whatever remedy is found the subject is one that is receiving, and will continue to receive, increased attention out of doors.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): My Lords, it is my good fortune in this House to represent a Department of which I think it may be said with certainty that it is the only Department which is in no manner connected, directly or indirectly, with the levying of rates. I therefore owe some apology to your Lordships for venturing to intervene in this debate; but I have been connected for a great number of years with the administration of a large county, and even the absorbing interest of foreign affairs cannot blot out of the mind of any Member of either House of Parliament who has taken an active part in local affairs the interest which he must feel from that connection.

My principal reason for rising to say a few words is to remove a misapprehension under which the noble Lord who has just spoken seemed to be in regard to what fell from my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture. The noble Lord seemed to think that my noble friend had in some way identified himself with a proposal for rating personalty.

*LORD ZOUCHE OF HARYNGWORTH: I was referring to what was said by the noble Earl who initiated the discussion, and not to what fell from the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture.

*THE EARL OF DENBIGH: I should like to say that I had no intention of arguing in favour of rating personalty. All I want is a further contribution from the personal property of the country towards helping taxation which falls to such a large extent on realty.

*LORD FITZMAURICE: I am glad then to think that neither the noble Earl opposite nor my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture identified himself with that proposal. Indeed, after the interesting investigations and reports of the Royal Commission it is now almost impossible to conclude that the rating of personalty in the real sense of the expression comes within the region of possibility. Sir George Murray and Sir Edward Hamilton entirely bear out in their Report what the noble Earl who introduced this subject said so well. But one of the great misfortunes of this question is that it has become so involved in a mass of details, so obscured by one Report after another, so taken up in Acts of Parliament which partly repeal and partly amend previous legislation, that the question has become to many minds almost abhorrent, although everybody acknowledges its immense importance. We must all acknowledge its great importance. Local expenditure has, as the noble Earl pointed out, gone up enormously, and it appears likely to continue to go up by leaps and bounds. Therefore, to introduce, or to endeavour to introduce, some order and method into the great mass of detail in which the subject is involved is a matter of increasing and urgent necessity.

I am not going to attack the late Government for not having taken up the Report, of the Commission, or rather those great Reports, and dealt with the subject of local taxation reform. I am quite willing to believe that had it not been for the important questions of foreign and colonial policy which occupied such a large part of their time and attention, they would, in all probability, have attempted to deal with the Report of the Commission which they themselves appointed. I regret that they only touched one small corner of the subject, the rating of agricultural land for certain purposes and the rating of tithe, apart from the other recommendations of the Commission. The late Government probably thought, as I imagine any Government would—and I put this in rather as a caveat on the part of this Government—that this question was an enormous one, which might very well occupy the whole of a Parliamentary session. If I desired to find a proof, if one were deemed necessary, of what I have just said, I would remind your Lordships that when the Local Government Act of 1888, which so largely altered the whole system of local government in this country, was passed, that measure did not stand by itself. It was very largely affected by the proposals in the Budget of that year, and when the great changes and reforms that were then made are spoken of they are sometimes identified with the name of the noble Viscount who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and sometimes with the name of Mr. Ritchie, who introduced the Bill. The reason is this, that although Mr. Ritchie was the parent of the Bill, the measure would have been quite impossible if the support and goodwill of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not been obtained. That is our position to-day.

This is a question which must obviously be largely settled elsewhere, because it is essentially a financial question. The Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day is master of the situation, and I may remind your Lordships that it has been pointed out in the Budget statement of the year that there are questions connected with the collection and transfer of rates under the system identified with the name of the noble Viscount which are receiving the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Any financial arrangement associated with the name of the noble Viscount must necessarily stand on a very strong foundation, because he is one of our greatest living authorities on finance. One of the most difficult duties of the Government will be to consider the strong arguments which induced the noble Viscount and Mr Ritchie to adopt that plan, and also, on the other hand, the very able arguments adduced against it by such high authorities as those who signed both the Majority and the Minority Reports of the Commission. But that something must be done we all agree.

We have heard much in this debate about the inequality of the incidence of local taxation on real and personal property; but there is another inequality which grows year by year and which will have to be considered—the inequality in the distribution of some of the grants from the Imperial Exchequer in aid of local taxation The distribution of the probate duty not only constitutes a very great injustice in the case of some counties, but is an admirable illustration of what the noble Earl who introduced this subject so ably directed our attention to—the difficulty and confusion of the whole question. In 1888 it was decided to make this distribution between the counties and county boroughs, and the counties that could show the larger proportion of main roads got the larger grants. It was not, perhaps, at that moment such an unfair thing. The distribution was called a temporary distribution, but it has gone on ever since, and now the retrograde counties have come into line in the matter of main roads, but still receive only their share on the basis of 1888. Thus the inequality has got worse and worse, and His Majesty's Government are perforce obliged to consider that question and cannot treat it as one that can be deferred indefinitely.

I believe myself that it will be most difficult to abolish compounding to any large extent, because of the very great convenience such an arrangement is to the local authority. I remember the great agitation that arose at the time when the compounding householder was abolished under Mr. Disraeli's Bill. I stood at the time as a candidate for Parliament, and although there were thorny and exciting questions on foot like the disestablishment of the Irish Church and the abolition of University tests, the only question I was asked was whether I would support the restoration of the compound householder. If we attempted again to abolish compounding we should meet with very considerable opposition. I hope the noble Earl will be satisfied with the expression of opinion to which his notice has given rise, and will not be disappointed when I say that on the whole this is a question the decision of which must lie elsewhere, and that probably the question of valuation and assessment will be found to lie at the root of the matter, and, as was intimated by my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board, will have to be dealt with first.

VISCOUNT RIDLEY: My Lords, I do not rise for the purpose of pressing His Majesty's Government on a matter on which it is obvious they cannot have had time to make up their minds. Nor do I wish to follow noble Lords who are thoroughly conversant with local finance as to schemes for altering the present unfairness of the incidence of rating. It is from the point of view of the heavy burden of the rates on the industrial community that I wish to say a few words. The burden of the rates falls very largely on industry, and the cases of removal, of which Messrs. Yarrow's is an example, are common. The evil effects of this burden falling upon industry is experienced, not only by the employer and the employee, who loses his occupation, but with great and increasing severity by those who remain in the district.

If the present position is compared with that of a year ago it will be found that the percentage of empty houses in the London County Council area has risen from under 2 to 4 per cent. This is obviously a serious matter, for as the proportion of empty houses increases the rates fall with greater severity on those remaining. It is not only in the case of one class of industry or in one district that the effect of the rates is to penalise British industries. Although railway companies are considered in many quarters as having no claim to consideration, they have a very considerable grievance in this matter. Within the last ten years the amount of money paid by the great railway companies in England has risen by something like 60 per cent. Whereas ten years ago they paid £173 a mile in rates, they now pay £283 a mile. Railways in other countries pay much less. It may interest your Lordships to know that in the United States the average amount paid in rates is £61 per mile, against £283 here. I do not for one moment suggest that the circumstances are precisely similar, but the fact is one which calls for careful investigation.

I heard of the case the other day of an agricultural parish in Northamptonshire, the population of which is a little over 4,000, and the acreage 1,671 acres. This parish carried out a drainage scheme which raised the local rates from 9d. to 3s. 1d. This burden fell mainly on the Midland Railway Company, who were assessed at £7,478 a year and paid 81 per cent. of the total rates. The railway company had to bear the burden of this drainage scheme although they gained practically no benefit from it. Railway companies all the while have no possibility of being represented on the spending authorities. It is, therefore, a clear case of taxation without representation. It must be borne in mind that under the present system the sufferers are not merely the railway directors and shareholders. The whole of the travelling and buying public are affected, inasmuch as they have to pay higher fares and rates of carriage on account of the heavy burden placed on the companies. I was glad to hear that His Majesty's Government are alive to the importance of this question, and I hope that when they come to deal with it they will do so in a large and comprehensive spirit, remembering the very important effect which rates have on the prosperity of the manufacturing industries of the country.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, your Lordships might suppose that we who sit on this Bench are wanting in respect to the House, or in appreciation of the importance of the subject we have been discussing, if we allowed this debate to close without expressing, in a few words, the interest we take in it. It has been, as our debates not infrequently are, of a somewhat inconclusive character, but I do not think that my noble friend who introduced the subject need regret having done so, for he has elicited a very instructive and useful discussion.

My noble friend would probably not be unwilling to leave the matter where it was left by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the speech to which we have just listened. It seems to me quite clear that we must accept as entirely reasonable the plea of His Majesty's Government for more time in which to examine this great question. It is one which has been before the public a long time, and which others have hesitated to deal with, and we can scarcely take them to task because they have not, in the first half year of their term of office, addressed themselves to the solution of the problem. It seems to me also reasonable to say that it cannot be properly dealt with unless the question of valuation is thoroughly examined, and, in addition to that, I think it may fairly be argued—indeed, it is obvious—that no settlement of this matter can be proposed except in connection with the financial arrangements of the year, which it must necessarily affect.

I trust, however, that His Majesty's Government will bear in mind that, although there are wide differences of opinion, although Lord Balfour's Commission produced, if I may borrow a phrase from Mr. Gladstone, not a Report, but a litter of Reports, throughout all those Reports there runs the admission that something should be done to give effect to the views which my noble friend Lord Denbigh has expressed this evening. There may be differences as to the proper mode of giving effect to these proposals. There are two distinct schools of thought upon them. There is the school of thought which we connect with the name of the noble Viscount, Lord Goschen, who I am sorry to see is not in his place at this moment, and who, in the year 1888, dealt courageously with this question. I have no doubt he would be ready to defend the views which he then held. But, on the other hand, these Reports contain weighty arguments which go to show that if relief is to be given to the ratepayers, it can be given in some better form than by the assignation of particular kinds of revenue in aid of local expenditure.

I have neither the knowledge nor the courage to decide between these two views. But what I do wish to insist upon is that both those who hold the one set of opinions, and those who hold the other, maintain, as indeed did Lord Spencer in the passages quoted by my noble friend, that this matter is one which requires the earnest attention of Parliament. By all means, if it is to be dealt with, let it be dealt with in the spirit indicated by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who evidently feels, as indeed the Royal Commission felt, and particularly two Members of that Commission—Sir George Murray and Sir Edward Hamilton—that if there is to be a rearrangement of these imposts the matter should be treated, not in a haphazard fashion, but on a thoroughly scientific basis.

The gravity of the problem has undoubtedly been increased by the rapid augmentation of local expenditure. To my mind, that is one of the most formidable and alarming circumstances which we have to consider in the age in which we are now living. It is not so very long since the local expenditure of this country stood at about one-half of its Imperial expenditure. The local expenditure now exceeds the Imperial expenditure of the country; and if we consider side by side the growth of Imperial as well as local indebtedness, I think we may indeed feel that the financial position is one which cannot be too seriously or carefully considered.

I will offer one or two observations only with regard to the question which occupied a conspicuous place in most of the speeches to which we have listened—the question of compounding. I have never yet met any one who did not believe that in principle compounding was an undesirable system, undesirable because it inevitably tends to diminish a sense of civic responsibility. There can be no doubt about that, and it is admitted, in so many words, in the Majority Report of the Commission. On the other hand, there are unquestionably very great difficulties in the way of its entire abolition. The Commission dwell upon the practical difficulties of collecting and enforcing payment from the large number of the poorest classes in our great towns who, as they point out, are in the habit of moving freely from one part of the country or one part of the neighbourhood to another, and who are therefore not always very easy to follow up. But I am bound to say that it does seem to me, particularly after listening to the evidence laid before us by the most reverend Primate, that the question of compounding should be very seriously examined by his Majesty's Government.

The Commission actually recommended that the compounding limit should be raised. I cannot help hoping that it may be found possible, on further examination, to lower that limit. I also think that the suggestion made by my noble friend, that in all cases where rent and rates are demanded at one and the same time, the rent and the rates should be separately shown, is one deserving of consideration. The noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture brushed that suggestion rather hastily on one side. He took the case of a man whose premises were valued at £4 a year, and said that if that man had to pay an additional 1d. in the £ the additional claim would amount only to 4d., which, he thought, was not likely to constitute an effective inducement to the ratepayer to look more closely into local affairs.

But, my Lords, supposing that the rates are already 7s. or 8s. in the £, that they have been rising penny by penny for years past, and that the ratepayer is given a full opportunity of seeing how the burden of the rates is growing and growing, until it is likely to swamp him and the neighbourhood in which he lives, I cannot help thinking that he will then acquire more of that sense of responsibility in which he is perhaps deficient at present, and that he will realise that, desirable as may be many of the objects for which the ratepayers' money is spent, those desires cannot be indulged consistently with the solvency of the district in which he lives. We heard with satisfaction from the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and from the President of the Board of Agriculture that His Majesty's Government are alive to the importance of this question, and propose to deal with it as soon as they conveniently can. All that we can do is very earnestly indeed to commend it to their attention, and to assure them that, so far as we are able, we shall regard it, not as one for Party dispute and recrimination, but rather as one concerning very closely the welfare of the people of this country, and one, therefore, regarding which both Parties may well co-operate to the best of their ability.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, I almost feel that I ought to make an apology to your Lordships for occupying your time even for a few moments, because, after the able speeches of my noble friends behind me, there is really nothing left for me to say on behalf of His Majesty's Government. But I am anxious to thank my noble friend opposite for the very fair spirit in which he has just addressed us, and particularly for his promise of assistance in the great and difficult work which lies before any Government which attempts to deal with this question.

Your Lordships know how long the question of local rating has been before the country. You know that many Governments have sought to deal with it and have not been successful in their undertaking, and you are well aware of the great complexity and difficulty with which the question is surrounded. This is in itself a sufficient reason to explain why past Governments have not desired to undertake a question of such great difficulty. But the time has undoubtedly come when this question ought to be fully considered and dealt with by the Government of the day. The late Government, although the Report of the Royal Commission was in their hands in 1901, did not feel themselves able to deal with the question in a large way. They preferred to deal with a single point of it, and they did so in a way which has always seemed to those with whom I have the honour to act as being a very imperfect, and, indeed, a very undesirable mode of dealing with the question. But the Agricultural Rates Act of last year was passed, I think, with the general understanding that it was for a limited period, four or five years, and that whatever Government was in power would during that interval attempt to come to some settlement of this question.

Noble Lords opposite may be well satisfied that His Majesty's present Government are determined to take the matter up. I was particularly glad to hear from my noble friend that he, with us, recognised that the question of valuation was a primary one upon which the matters rest. It is to that question, as we believe, the Government ought first to direct their attention, but, of course, that will be only to lay the foundation upon which the further revision of the whole subject must rest. You may be sure that the whole question is under the consideration of the Government and will be dealt with by them. You have the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in moving his Budget this year, that he was convinced that the existing system of the assignment of heads of taxation to local bodies had been shown to be unsound, and he desired to get rid of it at as early a period as possible. My noble friend pointed out that that system was established by the noble Viscount Lord Goschen. No doubt at the time it was established there were great hopes that it would be successful in its working. The noble Viscount is not in his place at the present moment. I do not know whether he has changed his opinion or not, but it is clear from the Report of the Commission that the system has broken down, and that the time has come when some other and more satisfactory system must be adopted for the purpose of aiding the local rates.

With respect to the question of compounding, I am one of those who believe that it will be found extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to abolish that system. I well recollect those days when the compound householder first rose into prominence. Your Lordships will remember that at the time of the passing of Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill the compound householder was abolished. Two years afterwards he was resuscitated by my noble friend Viscount Goschen, because his abolition had produced such a state of confusion. But when we hear such a speech as that which fell from the most reverend Primate to-night, when we hear how earnestly he argues against the continuance of this system and the great authorities to which he referred as being opposed to it, there is no doubt that it will be the duty of His Majesty's Government carefully to consider that branch of the subject.

I cannot say myself, if I speak my frank opinion, that I have much hope that we shall be able to arrive at the conclusion that it can be abolished. My noble friend opposite argued in favour of the figure being reduced at which compounding commences, but the Commissioners say let the figure be raised. Therefore, it is by no means clear that a reduction of the figure would be the right mode of dealing with the subject. It has been shown by past experience to be a question of infinite difficulty, and I am quite confident that my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board will give to that branch, as well as to every other branch of the subject, his most careful consideration.

MERCHANT SEAMEN'S ALLOTMENTS.

*LORD ELLENBOROUGH: My Lords, I gave my reasons for wishing that this Return should be granted when I addressed your Lordships on April 5th last. After consultation with the noble Earl who represents the Board of Trade a form of Return has been drawn up which will give all the information I ask for. I therefore beg to move for a Return in that form.

Moved, That there be laid before the House a Return showing the number of seamen (exclusive of officers) who entered into foreign-going agreements at the principal ports in the United Kingdom during the years 1903–1905, and the number of allotments made by them in the following form:—

Name of Port.	Number of Seamen (exclusive of Officers) who entered into foreign-going Agreements.	Number of Seamen (exclusive of Officers) who made allotments.		Percentage of Seamen who made allotments.
		To relatives or other persons.	To a Bank.	
Total - -				

—(*Lord Ellenborough.*)

The Earl of GRANARD: His Majesty's Government, as I have informed the noble Lord privately, will be very pleased to grant the Return for which he moves.

On Question, Motion agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 8th May, 1906.

The House met at a Quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords]. [Not amended], considered; to be read the third time.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Sea Fisheries Provisional Order Bill, "To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries under the Sea Fisheries Act, 1868, relating to the Estuary of the Wash, in the county of Norfolk," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; read the first time;

to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 197.]

London Outer Circle Railway Bill; Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Metropolitan Outer Circle Railway Bill, 1882, be referred to the Committee on the London Outer Circle Railway Bill.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Pontefract Corporation Bill. Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 4).

Sir George Doughty reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill, with Amendments.

They have passed a Bill, intituled, “An Act to authorise the Wallasey Urban District Council to construct a tramway and promenades, and to make further provision in regard to their gas, water, electricity, ferries, and tramways undertakings, and the health, local government, and improvement of their district; and for other purposes.” [Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [Lords.]

Wallasey Tramways and Improvements Bill [Lords], read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Alloa and Devon; Aldwarke (No. 1); Alva; Clackmannan; Fforest Isaf; Hartshead; Lanarkshire; Netherton; Tillicoultry; and, West Bromwich Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law. From Abberton; Acton Beauchamp; Acton Green; Amblecote; Astley; Atherstone on Stour; Attleborough; Ansley; Badsey with Aldington; Beaudesert; Birdingbury; Birlingham; Birtsmorton; Bishop's Waltham (two); Blackheath; Bolton (three); Brecon; Bradley; Bredicot; Broadwas; Broome; Budbrooke; Burnham Thorpe (two); Bushley; Carbrooke; Chaceley; Chaddesley Corbett; Charlecote; Charlton Pershore; Chawton (two); Chiddingstone (two); Chilvers Coton; Claines; Cleeve Prior; Clifton on Dunsmore; Cofton Hackett; Combroke; Cookley; Copdock; Cossall; Coventry (three); Cradley; Croftherne; Darlington (two); Defford cum Besford; Denton; Dersingham; Devynnock; Doverdale; Droitwich; Dudley; Earls Croome and Hill Croome; East Winch; Elmley Castle; Ethington; Facington (two); Farnborough; Farnsfield; Flyford Flavel; Foleshill; Fordham; Frankton; Gaydon with Chadshunt; Gow Honeybourne; Grandborough; Great Alne; Great and Little Hampton; Great Ringstead; Great Yarmouth; Harlington; Horstead; Hayes; Himbleton; Hinton Charterhouse; Holt; Honiley; Honingham and East Tuddenham; Horstead; Hunningham; Ickford (two); Kenilworth; Keresky; Kidderminster (two); Knights Enham cum Smannell; Leamington (three) Lighthorne; Little Comberton; Little Hulton; Littleton (two); Lound; Loxley; Marton; Masborough; Moreton Morrell; Moulton (two); Norton and Lenchwick; Norton juxta Kempsey; Old Swinford; Ombersley; Pershore (two); Pinvin; Priors Hardwick; Priors Marston; Ripple; Rodmell; Runham; St. Marylebone; St. Pancras (two); Sandon (two); Skillington (two); Snitterby; Snitterfield; Southam; Spetchley with Warndon; Stanford Rivers; Stanwell; Stibbington cum Sibson; Stockton; Stoke in Coventry; Stone; Stourbridge; Stretton on Fosse; Studley; Swavesey; Thorpe Abbotts; Toft Monks; Tredington; Upton on Severn; Upton Warren; Uxbridge; Ventnor (two); Walsgrave; Walton d'Eivile; Warwick (two); Wasperton; Waterbeach (two); West Bromwich; West Derby (two); West Drayton; Weston; Whichford; Wichenford; Wick; Wickhamford;

Wickham Market; Wilden; Witley; Woburn Sands (two); Wolverley; Wolverton; Wootton Wawen; Worcester (four); Wribbenhall; and, Wychbold; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petition from Great Grimsby, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

WAGES BOARDS BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (SPECIAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of Special Reports on Educational Subjects, Vol. 16, School Training for the Home Duties of Women. Part II. Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, and France [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ALIENS ACT, 1905.

Copy presented, of Return of Alien Passengers brought to the United Kingdom from Ports in Europe or within the Mediterranean Sea during the three months ending March 31st, 1906, together with the number of Expulsion Orders made during that period requiring Aliens to leave the United Kingdom [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered May 7th; *Mr. McKenna*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 161.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3579 to 3581 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 649 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the Borough of Camberwell (Dulwich Division), in the room of Dr. Frederick Rutherfoord Harris (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

PURCHASE INSPECTORS (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing (1) names of Inspectors on behalf of the Estates Commissioners; (2) date of original appointment; (3) date upon which appointment expires; (4) age on appointment; (5) residence at time of appointment; (6) locality in which practical experience of land was acquired; (7) where educated; (8) previous occupation; (9) acreage of land farmed; (10) whether held as owner or tenant; (11) what other experience in agriculture; and (12) what experience in valuing, mapping, and surveying."—(*Mr. Ginnell.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Irish Postal Assistants—Religious Qualification.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if it is with his sanction and approval that certain Irish postmasters, when advertising for assistants, stipulate that applicants must be Roman Catholics.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have no knowledge of any such advertisements as those referred to by the hon. Member, but if he will give particulars I will make inquiry.

Winton Sub-Post Office, Bournemouth.

SIR ROBERT HOBART (Hampshire, New Forest): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that the subpostmastership of Winton, Bournemouth, is now vacant, and in consideration of the large amount of work performed at that office, he will consider the question of putting it on the head office scale of the establishment; and if he will state what are the emoluments of the position, and how many applications have been received for the vacancy.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It is considered that the circumstances do not at present justify the post office at Winton, Bournemouth, being constituted a salaried sub-office. According to the latest returns the gross emoluments attaching to the sub-postmastership will be about £237 a year. Up to the present time two applications for the sub-postmastership have reached me.

Postal Sorting Allowances.

MR. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General, having regard to the fact that the experiment of town sorting and stamping by postmen which is now being made in several towns in England has been in successful operation in Dublin for years, if he will be good enough to extend the allowances to all the men performing those duties in that office.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The old system of allowances was abolished in 1897, following the recommendations of the Tweedmouth Committee, but the whole Question is at present under consideration.

Englishmen and Foreigners in Natal.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state what proportion of the white population of Natal is of British origin; and what proportion is composed of German, Dutch, Italian and other nationalities who hail from the borders of the Adriatic.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill*). According to the last Census figures, out of 97,109 Europeans over 74 per cent. were of English, Scotch, or Irish origin; nearly 13 per cent. of South African Dutch origin; and the remainder include nearly 5 per cent. of Germans, ·38 per cent. Dutch, ·37 per cent. Italians, and similar small percentages of other nationalities.

Passive Resisters.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state the number of passive resisters in England during the year 1905; and what was the amount of money involved.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary-Gladstone.*) I am not in possession of any information on this point, and do not know of any means by which it could be accurately obtained. There is no legal distinction between a passive resister and an ordinary rate defaulter.

Provision for the Temporary Discharge of the Duties of Deceased Recorders.

MR. ADKINS (Lancashire, Middleton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, owing to the death of the Recorder of Grimsby, on the 8th of April, two days before the day fixed by him for the holding of the quarter sessions, the deputy he had duly appointed could not legally sit, and in consequence the sessions were adjourned for a month by the mayor, and seventeen prisoners were remanded in custody to Hull prison; and whether, seeing that there is no statutory provision for the temporary discharge of the duties of a deceased recorder, pending the appointment of a permanent successor, the Government will initiate legislation to supply the want and to prevent the delay of justice, and the public inconvenience caused by the present state of the law.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I am aware of the facts stated, and I have already a Bill in draft to meet similar contingencies in future, which will, I hope, be introduced at an early date.

The Albert Hall Demonstration.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he has given, or is aware of any special instructions having been issued, to the Metropolitan police, and, if so, by whom, to prevent any overflow meeting or demonstration in the neighbourhood of the Albert Hall on Friday evening next, on the occasion of the Church of England meeting called to protest against the Education Bill; if so, what are the nature of such special instructions, and why they should have been especially applied in regard to this meeting.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) No special instructions have been given to the police for dealing with an overflow meeting on Friday evening; and the police are not aware that there will be any organised demonstration outside the Albert Hall.

St. Helena as a Naval Depot.

MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the strategical importance of St. Helena, and the approaching withdrawal of its military garrison, steps will be taken to establish a naval depot there.

(*Answered by Mr Edmund Robertson.*) The Answer is in the negative.

Non-provided Schools—Value of Provision of School House, etc.

MR MOND (Chester): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state what is the estimated amount of expenditure contributed by the managers of non-provided schools, by their providing a school building and doing the repairs thereof, per scholar on the register.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I have no figures in my possession which enable me to reply to the hon. Member's Question.

Expenditure on Elementary Education.

MR. MOND: To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state what is the average sum expended on elementary education per scholar in non-provided schools, and how much of such sum is provided from Treasury grants and how much by rates.

(*Answered by Mr Birrell.*) Previous to the Act of 1902 coming into force grants from the Imperial Exchequer to voluntary schools were paid to the managers, and statistics as to the total amount of grant paid were therefore available. Since the Act of 1902 local authorities have been responsible for the maintenance of council and voluntary schools alike; only one account is kept of the receipts and expenditure, and no separate figures are available as to the amounts received on behalf of one or other class of schools.

Religious Instruction in Secondary Schools.

MR. LEHMANN (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): To ask the President of the Board of Education what restrictions, if any, with regard to the religious denomination of pupils or teachers and public control over the management at present exist in the secondary schools recognised as eligible for grants by the Board; whether a local authority is allowed in the allocation of its grants of aid to distinguish between such schools on the ground of religion; and whether the Government contemplates, by legislation or otherwise, to secure that after a certain date grants shall be given only to schools in which there is no denominational disqualification of teachers or pupils, and which are subject to popular control.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) So far as concerns the Board's regulations for the Parliamentary grants in respect of secondary schools (i.) no school is eligible unless it admits day scholars freely upon a full conscience clause, and (ii.) no restrictions of any kind are laid down in regard to the teaching staff except that of educational efficiency; while (iii.) each school must have a governing body constituted in a manner approved by the Board upon which in the majority of cases there is some representation of the local authority, though this is not yet laid down as an invariable condition in the regulations. (iv.) With the exception above named the current regulations of the Board, being drawn in conformity with the principles of existing legislation, do not restrict the Exchequer grants to such secondary schools as have no denominational or undenominational restrictions upon pupils or staff; and schools of very varying types in this respect, some with and some without the characteristics referred to, are at present on the list of State-aided secondary schools. As regards grants in aid of secondary schools from the rates or the local taxation fund, a local authority is precluded by Section 4 (1) of the Act of 1902 from requiring "that any particular form of religious instruction or worship, or any religious catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination shall or shall not be taught, used, or practised in any school, college, or hostel aided but not provided by the council." I am not aware of any other religious distinctions which a local authority is statutorily precluded from making. The suggested policy referred to in the third paragraph of the Question, which raises problems of grave importance and would have far-reaching effects, has been receiving the serious attention of His Majesty's Government. In this connection it must be noted that local authorities have as yet themselves provided secondary schools to a very limited extent, and in many cases show great reluctance to incur rate expenditure in this direction, and the large number of efficient secondary schools which would be affected by the proposal are in nearly all cases greatly needed at present for the supply of secondary education in their respective districts. I am, therefore, not yet prepared to state that they could, without either imposing a burden on the ratepayers which they are apparently unwilling to accept or without inflicting too serious a loss to our existing educational provision be henceforth deprived of those public moneys upon which depends in almost all cases their efficiency, and in many their very existence. And this is the case, whether it be a question merely of the cessation of the Parliamentary grants, which is a matter of departmental regulation, or further of the prohibition of all local grants in aid which would of course require legislation. I may add that the number of secondary schools which, taking last year's figures, are subject to full popular control and presumably have no denominational disqualification for teachers or pupils, is, I believe, not more than eighty schools out of the total of some 500 State-aided secondary schools, as far as England (apart from Wales) is concerned, and, so long as this is the case, any Minister responsible for the secondary education of this country must deliberate very seriously before adopting the policy to which, but for these difficulties, he might unhesitatingly adhere.

Customs Chemical Assistants.

MR. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that on the imposition of the sugar duties in 1901 a number of men who do not hold certificates from the Civil Service Commissioners were introduced temporarily into the Customs Branch of the Government Laboratory and have since been employed on duties directly connected with the assessment of revenue; whether these temporary chemical assistants are officers of Customs within the meaning of the Customs Consolidated Act and regulations of the Department; and whether he is prepared to state if and when their services can be dispensed with.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) On the imposition of the sugar duties in 1901 the Treasury, in order to meet the extreme pressure of analytical work, sanctioned the employment in the Customs Branch of the Government Laboratory of a number of non-pensionable chemical assistants. These assistants have not been employed on the duties of Customs officers under The Customs Consolidation Act, 1876, but have worked under the supervision of a superior established officer of the Government Laboratory, who has been responsible for the assessment of the duty. Though not holding certificates from the Civil Service Commissioners some of these non-pensionable chemical assistants are in possession of University degrees in science, and all are fully competent for the duties they are called upon to discharge. Six of them are now employed, and the number is in course of gradual reduction.

Testing Work at the National Physical Laboratory.

MR. W. PEARCE (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether commercial tests, chemical or physical, are being undertaken at the National Physical Laboratory, or are included in the circular of charges of the laboratory; and, if so, whether such competition with private practitioners will be stopped, as being contrary to the recommendations of the Treasury Committee in 1898 and to the declared objects of the laboratory.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Except for Government work and for some few special cases which come individually before the Committee, chemical analyses are only undertaken by the National Physical Laboratory when required to elucidate some physical or mechanical question under investigation. The average number of chemical tests of all kinds during the past three years has been thirty-nine. The number of physical tests made and of instruments tested has averaged nearly 30,000. Physical tests, including tests on instruments, are undertaken in accordance with the recommendation of the Treasury Committee of 1898 establishing the laboratory as a public institution "for standardising and verifying instruments, for testing materials, and for the determination of physical constants." The members of the Treasury Committee with one exception became original members of the Executive Committee, and they have been careful to keep their work within the terms of the Report. The Committee are fully prepared to consider any complaints which may be made as to the nature of the testing work done and their rates of charges.

House of Commons Procedure.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): To ask the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton, as Chairman of the Select Committee on Procedure, whether he can now state how soon he expects to circulate the proposed suggestions for consideration, and when he proposes to convene the Committee for the resumption of work.

(*Answered by Sir Henry Fowler.*) The proposed suggestions for consideration have already been circulated, and a meeting of the Committee convened for Thursday the 10th instant.

Pay of Labourer Employed by Post Office at Bolton.

MR. GILL (Bolton): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that a labourer, twenty-six years of age, is employed in the postal telegraphs construction department at Bolton at a wage of 18s. per week of fifty-four hours; and whether he is prepared to issue instructions that the minimum wage for adult workers shall be not less than the amount hitherto paid by the department, viz., 24s.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I regret that I am not in a position to answer the hon. Member's Question to-day, as the inquiries which are being made are not yet completed. I will, however, communicate the reply shortly.

Married Women's Liability.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General whether his attention has been drawn to the decision of the House of Lords on March 26th in the case of Paquin *v.* Beauclerk (formerly Holden); and whether, in view of the importance of the decision to the trading community and the necessity shown for amending the law with regard to married women's liability, legislation will be introduced for the purpose of compelling a married woman, when purchasing goods, to disclose whether she is acting as principal or agent.

(*Answered by Sir Lawson Walton.*) It is not likely that time can be found this session for dealing with such a question, but there is a Bill now in the House of Lords for the amendment of the Married Women's Property Act, and there will be opportunity when that Bill reaches this House for the hon. Member to take such steps as he thinks fit.

Crown and Quit Rents in Ireland.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the exact terms under which the Crown and quit rents were levied in Ireland, and to what purpose the money was to be applied; whether he can state the total amount so realised and how it has been expended

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The quit, etc., rents payable to the Crown in Ireland are reserved in the ancient grants of lands made by the Crown. They are collected by the Commissioners of His Majesty's Woods under the Crown Lands Acts. The purchase moneys for quit, etc., rents sold have been merged in the capital of the Crown Land Revenues of the United Kingdom, and the surplus income has been annually paid into the Imperial Exchequer. The last Return, made to the House of Lords, of purchase moneys received was for eight years up to March 31st, 1905, and the amount was £118,725 12s. 3d. The accounts for the subsequent year are not yet complete. The quit, etc., rents now payable to the Crown amount to about £32,700 per annum.

Sale of Mrs. G. C. P. Mahon's Estate at Strokestown.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will call the attention of the Estates Commissioners to the manner in which the Land Purchase Act of 1903 is tried to be administered in the sale of Mrs. Grace C. P. Mahon's estate, Strokestown, in getting her direct tenants to sign purchase agreements for houses and plots of land in the occupation of sub-tenants, thereby depriving the tenants in occupation of reductions given to direct tenants since May 1st, 1905, in not providing sub-tenants with turbary and plots of land in or convenient to the town, and in allowing landlords, large graziers, and eleven months men to sign purchase agreements for the land convenient to the town, which should have been divided and given to the householders of the town; and whether he will request the Estates Commissioners to put in operation Section 15 of the Land Act, 1903, and not to accept the middle owners' payments as interest or otherwise in respect of such purchase agreements.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that 172 agreements to purchase holdings on this estate were lodged with them on April 25th. The question of the rights of sub-tenants will be dealt with by the Commissioners after the report of the inspector has been received, and with due regard to Section 15. The method in which the landlord has dealt with untenanted land, and the question of making advances applied for by newly created tenants, will also be duly considered. Until these cases have been ruled on, the Commissioners consider that the interest payable under the agreements lodged must be collected.

Application of Thomas Doona for Reinstatement.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the application for reinstatement by Thomas Doona, on the Blennerhassett estate, near Killorglin, has been received by the Estates Commissioners; and whether they will take early steps to have it carried into effect.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have not received the application in question. If such an application should be made to them, they will consider it in due course.

Sale of Faulkner's Estate, Springhill, Queen's County.

Mr. HAMMOND (Carlow): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, is he aware that in respect of the Faulkner's estate, Springhill, Queen's County, the landlord, the legatees of Fisher, and the tenant came to an agreement in February, 1905, as to terms of sale and purchase of this property, and that the tenants were informed by Mr. Wilson, representing the Estates Commissioners, that he himself and the landlord were quite satisfied with that agreement; and, as no progress has been made in this matter, will he state what has been the cause of this delay and when the condition of sale will be definitely settled.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the estate in question is for sale in the Land Judge's Court, and that they issued a request under Section 7 of the Act of 1903 in regard to it. The Commissioners have had the estate inspected, but owing to certain legal difficulties they have not yet been able to make an offer for purchase. The Commissioners expect to be in a position shortly to make an offer.

System of Alloting First Commissions in the Royal Field Artillery and the Royal Engineers.

Mr. BRODIE (Surrey, Reigate): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state on what grounds are first commissions in the Royal Field Artillery allotted according to a different system from that in force in allotting first commissions in the Royal Engineers, or *vice versa*.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The commissions in the Royal Engineers are allotted to cadets in the order in which they pass out of the academy, assuming that the highest on the list elect for the Royal Engineers. The remainder of the cadets get Royal Artillery commissions, the selection for Field Artillery being made according to the marks obtained in the subjects of Field Artillery drill, riding, and horsemastership. This system is the result of very careful consideration, and would appear to provide the most suitable officers for the Field Artillery.

Promotion to Warrant Rank in the Royal Artillery.

Captain FABER (Hampshire, Andover): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the method of promotion to warrant rank in the Royal Horse Artillery and the Royal Field Artillery could be amended by making the seniority list for promotion date from day of promotion to sergeant instead of to staff-sergeant; and whether he is aware that, at present, amongst corporals in different brigades promoted to the rank of sergeant on the same day (January 1st, 1898), one became staff-sergeant on January 1st, 1903, and another on January 1st, 1906, their characters being equal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Promotion to warrant rank is made from the rolls of staff-sergeants in order of seniority to battery staff-sergeant. Until January 1st, 1906, promotion to battery staff-sergeant was carried out in brigades, and necessarily the rate of promotion fluctuated. On the above date the system was changed, and promotion was made from one roll of sergeants in the United Kingdom, one in South Africa, and one in India. This will make the rate of promotion more uniform in future, and will practically make promotion to staff-sergeants date from promotion to sergeant. As regards the last part of the Question, the facts are as stated, and under the old system these occurrences were unavoidable.

History of the Boer War.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state the amount of money granted for the compilation of an authentic history of the Boer War; and whether he can state how far the work has progressed, and when it is expected it will be published.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is estimated that the cost of the official History of the South African War will have amounted from first to last to at least £27,000; of this sum the amount expended up to March 31st, 1906, was about £22,000. Against this sum there will be profits from its sale which have not been and cannot be estimated. The first volume will probably be out by midsummer, the second and third volumes about the end of the year, and the concluding volume in 1907.

Cost of Fixing Fog Signal on Isle of Rona.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the estimated cost of establishing a light and fog signal on the island of Rona, 39 miles north-east of the Butt of Lewis.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses that they estimate the cost of establishing a light and fog signal on the island of North Rona at £20,000 roughly.

Foreign Crew of Steamer "Blythville"

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that the steamer "Blythville" is almost entirely manned by a crew composed of Spaniards as sailors and firemen, and whether he is aware that those Spaniards are unable to speak and understand the English language; whether he will make inquiries with regard to this matter on the arrival of the "Blythville" at Dunston, Newcastle-on-Tyne, at which port the vessel is expected to arrive on Tuesday 8th May; and will he state what action he proposes to take.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiries are being made in the case to which the hon. Member refers. When I come in possession of all the facts I will consider what, if any, action should be taken.

Train Arrangements at Castleblayney.

Mr. McKEAN (Monaghan, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if, having regard to the inconvenience caused to traders and other persons from Culleville attending markets and fairs in Castleblayney, which is the nearest town, as also having regard to the loss occasioned to Castleblayney by reason of the present defective train service, he will make representations to the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland as will induce them to stop at least on Wednesdays the train that passes Culleville soon after three o'clock, as under existing arrangements people from the last-mentioned town attending markets and fairs in Castleblayney have barely an hour for transacting their business.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Board of Trade have no statutory powers in this matter, but I am sending a copy of the hon. Member's Question to the railway company for any observations they may wish to offer thereon, and I will cause the hon. Member to be communicated with on receipt of the company's reply.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

German Naval Expenditure.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the official figures published by the Admiralty of German naval expenditure include pensions; and whether he will state the increase or decrease of the gross Estimates for the two countries since 1903–4, excluding the non-effective Vote for pensions in each case.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): The figures given for the German naval expenditure in Parliamentary Papers 155 and 299, of session 1905, to which it is assumed the hon. Member refers, do not include pensions. The increase or decrease of the gross Estimates for the two countries since 1903–4, excluding the non-effective Votes for pensions in each case, is as follows:—

Germany.

		£	
1904–5	Decrease	298,434	(actual).
1905–6	Increase	1,322,110	(estimated).
1906–7	Increase	975,183	do.

Great Britain.

		£	
1904–5	Increase	997,959	(actual).
1905–6	Decrease	3,467,844	(estimated).
1906–7	Decrease	1,321,438	do.

The figures given for Great Britain are exclusive of outlay under the Naval Works Loan, but include the annuities for repayment of loan expenditure.

Royal Naval College, Osborne.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state how many cadets have been selected for training at the Royal Naval College, Osborne, since the college was established; in how many instances parents or guardians have been required to withdraw cadets on account of the inability of such youths to show satisfactory progress in such training; and, having regard to the fact that such cadets were originally examined and passed by a Board of Admiralty, will he state in what way parents or guardians have been compensated for their expenditure on uniform and training.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: 588 cadets have been appointed for training at the Royal Naval College, Osborne, since the college was opened in September, 1903, of which number forty-three have been withdrawn on account of unsatisfactory progress. Parents enter their sons under the condition that if satisfactory progress is not made they are to be withdrawn.

Accountant-General's Department (Admiralty)—Second Division Clerks.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, having regard to the fact that the clerks on the second division of the Accountant-General's Department of the Admiralty have been reduced from 120 to sixty-four, will he state whether any of these clerks have been drafted to other offices; and, if any, how many; and, seeing that this Vote shows a new charge of £13,442 for salaries of 151 accountant clerks (hired), will he state from what source these hired clerks have been obtained; how many have been selected who have not passed a Civil Service examination; and why the examination rule has been departed from.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The authorised reduction of second division clerks is from 148 in the Estimates for 1905–6 to ninety in the Estimates for 1906–7. Of those thus rendered redundant eight have, up to the present, been transferred to other offices. The hired accountant clerks now serving have been obtained from various sources. None have passed a Civil Service examination for entry into this particular grade, but a certain number passed the examination for boy clerk. As the new class is not on the establishment, no examination is considered necessary.

H.M.S. "Actæon"—Pollution of the Medway.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that H.M.S. "Actæon," with about 300 men on board, has been for some months past moored near Stangate Creek, in the river Medway, and is being used as a torpedo school, he will say if the Lords of the Admiralty have received representations from various sanitary authorities and other bodies pointing out the danger to public health involved by the discharged of sewage from this vessel for so long a period; and, having regard to the close proximity of oyster layings, what steps the Lords of the Admiralty intend to take to obviate or minimise such danger.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Admiralty have received representations on this subject, and after careful consideration have decided that the removal of the vessel from her present station is unnecessary. Instructions have, however, been issued that the discharge of sewage is to be so regulated as to obviate the danger referred to.

Admiralty—Printing and Stationery Vote.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury to what causes he attributes the increase in the Vote for stationery and printing for the Admiralty, in Class 7, Vote 1, from £73,299 in 1901–2 to £117,774 in 1904–5; whether he can give the expenditure under this heading for 1905–6; and whether this matter is one which will be dealt with by the Committee on Stationery.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA Monmouthshire, N.): The chief causes of this large increase appear to be the reorganisation of the fleet, involving the re-casting of a great quantity of forms, an expansion in the number of manuals and intelligence publications generally, a large addition to the number of Admiralty committees, and the substitution of the supply of stationery in kind for the system of allowances in lieu which has previously obtained. The expenditure for 1905–6 was about £110,000. The subject is not within the terms of reference to the Select Committee on Government Publications, but it is occupying the attention of the Boards both of the Treasury and of the Admiralty who hope to be able to effect economies.

Military Manœuvres.

MAJOR RENTON (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state, with reference to the coming military exercises in Sussex, what public and private bodies, if any, objected to their being held there, and on what grounds they objected; and the names of the private individuals, if any, that objected, and the grounds of their objections.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): Objections were received from the East Sussex Farmers' Club and the Parish Councils at Patcham, Alfreston, and Bennington, but no grounds were stated. A petition from a number of owners, lessees, and occupiers was forwarded by the Earl of Chichester, setting forth the grounds of objection, the chief of which were that the Manœuvres Act was not intended to provide for training for three months, and that the land selected was unsuitable for such manœuvres owing to the sheep and to special agricultural conditions. I subsequently received a deputation on the subject, and I am glad to say, in order to meet the views set before me, was able to reduce the period for the manœuvres from three months to one month, this to be selected by the local authorities.

Rights of Natives in South Africa.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether our fellow subjects, natives of India and also the natives of Natal, are precluded from holding lands or properties, and from the pursuit of various trading industries, and also from possessing civil rights; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any steps to secure their being placed on the same footing as British residents.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The hon. Member has omitted to specify to what part of the world his Question is intended to apply; and if I am to assume that it is South Africa that he has in view, I am still left in doubt concerning which State or States he seeks information. The laws which impose disqualifications of different characters on natives of India and upon South African aboriginals vary considerably in the Cape Colony, Natal, the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, Rhodesia, and Zululand, and it would be idle for me to attempt to satisfy the hon. Gentleman until I know more definitely what his wishes are.

MR. MYER: It is a case of "terminological inexactitude."

Maori Land Settlement Act.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether his attention has been drawn to the provisions of the Maori Land Settlement Act passed by the New Zealand Legislature in 1905; and whether, in view of the provisions of the Treaty of Waitangi, concluded in 1840 between the Crown and the Maori chiefs of New Zealand, he proposes to advise the Crown to exercise its right of veto.

MR. CHURCHILL: The right hon. Gentleman has asked me to reply to this Question. The Secretary of State has carefully considered the Act and has seen no reason to advise His Majesty to exercise his powers of disallowance with respect to it. It appears to involve no infraction of the Treaty of Waitangi. It passed the Second and Third Readings without a division in the House of Representatives, which contains four Maori members. The only Maori member who spoke on the Third Reading supported the Bill.

MR. ASHLEY: Is it not the fact that when New Zealand was granted a Constitution in 1852 power over these Maori lands was expressly reserved to the Crown?

MR. CHURCHILL: I can only say that in the opinion of the advisers of the Secretary of State the Bill which passed through the New Zealand Legislature involves no infraction of the Treaty. It gave no dissatisfaction whatever to the Maoris. The Maori members in the House of Representatives supported it, and the only one who spoke complained that it did not go far enough.

MR. ASHLEY: Will the hon. Gentleman look further into the Question?

MR. CHURCHILL: If any further Question is put the matter shall be further investigated.

Bagdad Railway—Turkish Customs Duties.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, since one reason for the late Government's refusal in 1903 to co-operate officially in the construction of the so-called Bagdad Railway was the desire of the Turkish Government to increase the Customs duties from 8 per cent. to 11 per cent., and to pledge such increase as a guarantee of interest on the requisite capital, His Majesty's Government has consented to this increase of the Turkish duties; whether this increase is to be used as a kilometric guarantee, in whole or in part, towards the construction of the Bagdad Railway as already constructed or projected; whether His Majesty's Government is obtaining any substantial concession from the Turkish Government in return for consenting to this increase in the Customs duties; and whether the Turkish or German Governments, or any financial group, has requested His Majesty's Government to reconsider the refusal to co-operate in the construction of the Bagdad Railway or to provide a terminus upon the Persian Gulf; and, if so, whether the results may, if no sufficient objection exists, be communicated to the House.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): His Majesty's Government have not, as yet, consented to the proposed increase in the Turkish Customs duties. As to the conditions on which they are prepared to do so, I would refer the hon. Member to the reply which I am giving to a Question from the hon. Member for the Ripon Division of Yorkshire on this subject.† The question of the Bagdad Railway has not recently been brought before His Majesty's Government officially from any quarter.

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† See next Question and Answer.

MR. LYNCH (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any negotiations are at present pending or contemplated between His Majesty's Government and the Porte for an increase in the Customs duties on British goods imported into Turkey as fixed by treaty; and whether, in view of the fact that the great preponderance of the import trade into Turkey is in British and Indian hands, he will ascertain the views of the representatives of that trade before sanctioning any such increase.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Negotiations with regard to the conditions on which His Majesty's Government can assent to an increase in the Turkish Customs duties have been in progress for some time. Throughout these negotiations the preponderating importance of British trade with Turkey and the views of representatives of that trade have been fully borne in mind. We have been in consultation with the Board of Trade, and the Embassy at Constantinople is fully informed of the special points to which importance is attached.

Ottoman Railway to Mekka.

MR. LYNCH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give the House any information as to the progress of the Ottoman railway from Syria to Mekka; whether a branch line is in process of construction from that railway to Akabah; and, if so, from what point; whether he has any official information showing that from 4,000 to 5,000 Turkish troops are concentrated at Medauara, about 100 miles south-east of Akabah; and whether instructions have been issued by the Turkish authorities that no British subject is to be employed in any capacity on the railway, German surveyors and officials being already so employed.

SIR EDWARD GREY: We understand that the line has been completed as far south as Medauara, and that the next section to Thabouk, 120 kilometres, is expected to be in working order in the course of this year. The branch from Medauara to Akabah has been surveyed, but the construction is believed to have been temporarily suspended. We have no official information as to the concentration of Turkish troops in the neigbourhood of Medauara. We are not aware that any instructions have been issued by the Turkish authorities in the sense suggested.

El Arish—Removal of Boundary Pillars.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can state what report was brought back from El Arish by His Majesty's Ship "Minerva" with reference to the alleged removal of boundary pillars by Turkish troops; and whether he can make any statement as to the general progress of the negotiations between the Turkish and Egyptian Governments.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Captain of His Majesty's Ship "Minerva" reported that the boundary pillars had been removed, and some Egyptian telegraph poles in Egyptian territory had been replaced by others.

Prison Officials' Pay.

MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a petition from the officers employed in His Majesty's local prisons, complaining of the difference between the rates of pay existing in the subordinate ranks of the convict and local prisons; whether he is aware that assistant warders in these prisons are obliged to commence their duties at a wage of 23s. a week, with an annual increment of 4½d. a week to a maximum of 26s., and in the case of warders a minimum of 27s. advancing to a maximum of 30s.; and whether, considering the hours and the character of the duties of these men, he will consider the advisability of giving them increased remuneration.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer I gave yesterday to the hon. Member for Sunderland†, which was to the effect that this Question will receive my most careful consideration.

Metropolitan Police.

MR. LEA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received an appeal on behalf of the Metropolitan Police asking that they should be allowed at least one day's rest in every week; and whether, in view of the duties this body of public servants have to discharge in the Metropolis, he is prepared to concede this claim.

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† See Col. 979.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: I fear I can only refer the hon. Member to the Answer I gave yesterday to the hon. Member for Brixton†, to the effect that this privilege cannot be granted, as it would involve an additional expenditure of about £150,000 a year.

MR. LEA: Cannot they be given a fortnight's holiday yearly, instead of ten days?

*MR. GLADSTONE: I must have time to consider that.

Mount Pleasant Factory—Conditions of Employment.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that the conditions of employment in the wood working factory at Mount Pleasant, W.C., debar trade unionists from seeking or accepting employment there, he will consider whether, under all circumstances, it would be more economical to accept the union rules embodying rates of wages and hours as the conditions of employment for cabinet makers and joiners at Mount Pleasant?

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The hon. Member refers, no doubt, to the piecework system. This system has been in force over twenty years; the men work forty-eight hours and earn very substantial wages in addition to other benefits.

MR. O'GRADY: Is it to continue simply because it has been in force ten years?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Not at all.

Religious Tests for Teachers.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I wish to put a Question, of which I have given private notice, to the Minister for Education which may help us to raise a clear issue in the course of the education debate now proceeding. It is whether the words in Clause 7, Section 2, which says that a teacher employed in a public elementary school "shall not be required as a condition of his employment to subscribe to any religious creed," exclude or are intended to exclude inquiries as to the fitness of the teacher to give the religious instruction contemplated under the Bill, or whether they are merely intended to prevent such subscriptions to dogmatic formularies as used to be required in the case of University Fellowships, but which have never been required in the case of elementary teachers.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): So far as intention is concerned, the Answer must be in the negative. No restraint is intended to be placed on the local education authority in satisfying itself that teachers who undertake to give religious teaching are not unqualified to give it.

The Yarmouth Election.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I beg to ask the Solicitor-General, in the absence of the Attorney-General, a Question of which I have given private notice—whether his attention has been drawn to the numerous cases of admitted bribery, fifteen in all, that occurred during the recent Parliamentary election at Yarmouth; what steps, if any, he proposes to take in connection with such admissions; and whether, having regard to the result of the election petition that has just been presented, he will consider the advisability of introducing a Bill to amend the Corrupt Practices Act.

*THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (SIR W. ROBSON, South Shields): The attention of the law officers has been drawn to the evidence as to cases of bribery at Yarmouth during last election. Most of those cases are covered by certificates exempting the bribed persons from prosecution owing to the fact that they have made a full disclosure in evidence of their misconduct, but in any case where there is no certificate the papers shall be laid before the Director of Public Prosecutions. On the second part of the Question the evidence at election petitions will of course be carefully considered with a view to seeing if it discloses any reason to believe that the existing law as to corrupt practices is not adequate for its purpose.

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† See Col. 979.

MR. DALZIEL: I hope that special attention will be given to the point whether there ought not to be three Judges instead of two for the trial of election petitions.

Exports of Horses to the Continent.

SIR G. KEKEWICH (Exeter): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been called to the conditions of the traffic in broken down old horses carried on between English ports and the continent; and, if so, whether he will take steps to put a stop to the cruelties involved; and will he say whether such horses are exported for human food.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): The traffic in question is subject to the provisions of the Exportation of Horses Order, 1898, and the conditions under which it is carried on are under the constant supervision of the Inspectors of the Board. I will supply my hon. friend with a copy of the Order. Some of the horses exported are used for human food.

Arinacrinachd and Camersterrach Public Schools.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that Dr. Young, the medical officer of health for the western district of Rossshire, reports that the health of the children attending the public schools at Arinacrinachd and Camersterrach is imperilled through collections of stagnant water at the entrance to the schools; and will the Local Government Board for Scotland communicate with the local authority on the subject with a view to the nuisance being removed.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The Local Government Board are aware of the statements in the Report referred to, and have already communicated with the local authority with a view to the removal of any nuisance found to exist.

Island of Lewis—Health Administration.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the expediency of taking over the public health administration of the island of Lewis has yet been considered, especially having regard to the recommendations contained in Dr. Dittmar's Report on the sanitary condition of the island, which was placed in the hands of the Local Government Board for Scotland more than a year ago; and to the fact that the local authorities, in endeavouring to give effect to the Public Health (Scotland) Acts, have already imposed the maximum rate fixed by statute, and are powerless to enforce the provisions of the Acts.

MR. SINCLAIR: This subject is under consideration; and I am not yet able to add anything to what has already been said in reply to the hon. Member.

Scottish Education Reports.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that the Education (Scotland) Reports for the Southern and Western Divisions have been issued, will he state when the Education (Scotland) Report, Northern Division, will be in the hands of Members.

MR. SINCLAIR: It is expected that the Report in question will be in the hands of Members in the course of the next few days.

Irish Evicted Tenants.

*MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the smallness of the amount of untenanted land so far acquired by the Estates Commissioners, and the consequent want of progress in the restoration of evicted tenants, while untenanted land suitable for them is being divided and sold direct to graziers, in fraud of the law; and whether, seeing that this is due in part to the absence of a scale for remunerating persons negotiating sales of such land to the Estates Commissioners in accordance with sub-sections (9), (10), and (11), of Section 23 of the Land Act of 1903, he will have this obstacle removed by the preparation and publication of a graduated scale, especially in relation to untenanted land.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the extent of untenanted land actually purchased by them is 20,910 acres, and that they are engaged in purchasing, or are negotiating for the purchase of, 63,340 acres in addition. I have already informed the hon. Member that the Commissioners are not aware of the occurrence of any such case of fraud as is alluded to. The scale of fees for negotiators mentioned in Section 23, subsection (11), of the Act of 1903, has not yet been settled, upon the ground that a sufficient number of cases has not yet arisen to form the basis of such scale, claims made by negotiators under this sub-section are dealt with by the Commissioners and the Treasury on the merits of each particular case. The Commissioners have no knowledge that the absence of a scale of fees for negotiators has prevented purchase.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): How can they say they have no knowledge when one of their own members holds 100 acres of grazing land in county Galway?

Irish School Teachers.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry E): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that some teachers in Ireland are barred from promotion to the higher grades by circumstances over which they have no control, such as averages, standard numbers, school premises, &c.; and if he proposes to take any steps to remove this disability.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that teachers are not eligible for promotion to the several higher grades unless the average attendance reaches the figure which is specified in each case by Rule 104. No teachers have yet been refused promotion by the operation of this rule. The condition of neatness and good order in which school premises are kept, but not the structural condition of premises, is an element in the consideration of promotion. The Commissioners have no present intention of altering the rules in this regard.

Irish Department of Agriculture—Veterinary Branch.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing the importance to the public of the proper staffing and working of the veterinary branch of the Department of Agriculture, and the impossibility of having this branch thoroughly inquired into without examining some of the officers already employed, he will give instructions to enable these men to lay their views before the Committee of inquiry.

MR. BRYCE: I have nothing to add to my reply to the similar Question of the hon. Member for South Down on Wednesday last,† to which I have already referred the hon. Member

Irish Teachers' Salaries.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received from the Irish National Teachers' Organisation a resolution, unanimously adopted at the recent congress of teachers held in Waterford, demanding, in the interests of education, that assistant teachers of ten years' efficient service be awarded the salary of second grade teachers, and be eligible for the increments of the grade; whether the National Board have approved of this demand; whether he will state the amount that would be annually required to carry it out; and when will he place on the Estimates this sum.

*MR. BRYCE: I have received from the National Teachers' Organisation a number of resolutions including that referred to in the Question. I have already informed the hon. Member that the Commissioners of National Education cannot state what amount would be required to make the change suggested without the preparation of a return involving considerable labour. The Commissioners, however, estimate that if all the demands made in the resolutions were conceded, the Vote would be increased from its present amount of less than £1,400,000 to considerably over £3,000,000. The Commissioners do not approve of the demand referred to in the

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† See Col. 572.

Question. As I have stated on several occasions, the whole question of the teachers' salaries will receive consideration, but I am not yet prepared to make any detailed statement on the subject.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Does the right hon. Gentleman say it would cost over £3,000,000, to grant the claims of these assistant teachers?

*MR. BRYCE: No—the figures refer to the claims made for the whole body of teachers.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: What would it cost to meet the demands of this particular section—to give the increase to second grade teachers?

*MR. BRYCE: If a further Question is put I will send it to the Commissioners.

Kerry Evicted Tenants.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will send an inspector to the county Kerry to inquire into and report on the cases of all evicted tenants who have sent in applications for reinstatement; whether, in case the landlord is unwilling to sell the whole of his estate, the inspector will inquire from him if he will sell the evicted tenants' portion; and whether, in cases where the evicted tenant's holding is in the occupation of another, the inspector will inquire what he paid for it when entering, and will report what compensation would be sufficient for his leaving it.

*MR. BRYCE: I have already informed the hon. Member that the additional inspectors who have been appointed to inquire into the claims of evicted tenants will enter upon their work without delay. The nature of the inquiries to be made is indicated in Part IV. of the Instructions to Inspectors, dated March 9th last, which were laid on the Table. The Estates Commissioners inform me that in cases in which the holding of an evicted tenant is in the occupation of a person who is willing to surrender it, they will inquire as to the amount of compensation which the present occupier would require.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Have the Commissioners any definite instructions directly to approach landlords and agents with the object of opening up negotiations for the reinstatements of evicted tenants?

*MR. BRYCE: If the hon. Member will look at the Act he will see how far their instructions justify them in doing so.

Shirley Estate.

MR. McKEAN (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many applications to fix fair rents on holdings on the Shirley estate have been heard by Messrs. Edge, Smith, and Kyle, or any two of them sitting as a Sub-Commission; in how many of these applications the first term rent was raised or confirmed; what was the average reduction obtained as a result of such applications; what was the average reduction secured on first term rents at second term hearing throughout Ireland; whether the aforementioned Sub-Commissioners are still on the staff of the Land Commission, and, if so, in what capacity; whether any date has been fixed by the Chief Commission for the hearing of the numerous appeals which have been lodged as a result of the decisions of the above-mentioned Sub-Commission; and whether arrangements will be made for the hearing of these appeals in Carrickmacross.

*MR. BRYCE: The Land Commission inform me that they do not consider it right that they should discuss the results of the decisions of Sub-Commission Courts for the purpose of replies to Parliamentary Questions. In the particular cases referred to, a considerable number of appeals have been lodged, and the cases are *sub judice.* These appeals will be taken up, the Commissioners inform me, at the earliest opportunity, having regard to the prior rights of other outstanding appeal cases. They have not told me whether appeals would be heard at Carrickmacross, and there has not been time to repeat this Question to them; but as it is a central place I should think they would, and if the hon. Member wishes, I will convey the suggestion.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Cannot the right hon. Gentleman say how many of these Sub-Commissioners are still on the staff of the Land Commission?

*Mr. BRYCE: The Commissioners have given me no information on that point.

Mr. McKEAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman press for it?

*Mr. BRYCE: I have no power over the Commissioners. I have endeavoured to state what I believe to be their reasons for not giving certain information which the hon. Member asks for.

Post Office Savings Bank—Irish Business.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has considered the advisability of moving all the Irish business of the Post Office Savings Bank to headquarters in Dublin; and, if so, when he proposes to give effect to this proposal.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The question of the advisability of transferring the Irish business of the Post Office Savings Bank to headquarters in Dublin has been considered on several occasions. It is more convenient and economical to keep the Savings Bank accounts at one central institution, and greater facilities are thereby afforded for making or withdrawing deposits at any office in the United Kingdom, than would be possible if the Irish accounts were kept in Dublin.

Bangor (County Down) Post Office.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether any decision has yet been arrived at with regard to the site for the new post office Bangor, county Down; whether, in view of the local discontent with reference to the site originally proposed, he can now state definitely that that site has been abandoned; and whether his attention has been called to the fact that the memorial now being signed in favour of it is being promoted by the chairman of the urban council, who is also the vendor of the site.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have given most careful consideration to the question of the site of the new post office at Bangor, and, after the representations of the hon. Member, I instructed the Secretary in Dublin to make a special report on the subject. After careful inquiry he reports that, taking everything into consideration, the site in Main Street is the most suitable of the three sites originally available, and I do not, therefore, see my way to alter the decision originally come to. But in order to meet the convenience of the other part of the town, I propose to open a sub-office in or near Ballymagee Street. As regards the memorial to which the hon. Member refers, I have no information as to who promoted the memorial, but I find it was signed by the parish priest, by the rector, and by the other ministers, and by a large number of prominent citizens in each of the five wards. But in any case, the memorial had no effect on the result, as it was not received until after the Secretary at Dublin had considered his report.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Then is it the case that in order to settle this dispute the right hon. Gentleman has had practically to provide two offices.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Can the right hon. Gentleman name any town of like size and population in the whole of the United Kingdom which has both post office and a sub-office.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I will inquire into that.

Mr. MACVEAGH: It's a conundrum for you.

Housing of the Working Classes.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he will bring on the Motion for the appointment of a Select Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill at a reasonable hour to-night, so that it may be properly discussed.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): The Motion can be brought on only after eleven o'clock, as the remainder of the sitting has already been allotted to the Education Bill.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE said the Motion conveyed an imputation on the Members with whom he was associated, and if it could be put down for a reasonable hour it might not be necessary to move the suspension of the eleven o'clock rule.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am afraid we cannot come to any arrangement. There is no imputation made upon any one, but obviously it was inconvenient yesterday in this way to absorb a great part of the time which the House expected to be devoted to the Education Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked if it was to be understood that in the event of the debate on the Education Bill being stopped some few minutes before eleven, no attempt would be made to take business other than that referred to in the Motion.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is so, no other business will be taken.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Cannot the Government give us one or two hours before eleven o'clock in order to discuss this matter?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir. An arrangement has been come to to conclude this debate on Thursday, and we are bound to give the House the whole of the time up till then for the purposes of the discussion.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL).

Ordered, that the Proceedings on the nomination of the Select Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill be not interrupted this evening under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House), and may be entered upon and proceeded with at any hour, though opposed.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)

SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures—Mr. Bright; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Robinson.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

FATAL ACCIDENTS AND SUDDEN DEATHS INQUIRY (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend The Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Act, 1895, and to make further provision for Inquiry into Sudden and Suspicious Deaths in Scotland," presented by the Lord-Advocate; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 198.]

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): Before I proceed to an examination of the main principles upon which the Bill is founded, I should like to say a few words about a clause in which I am specially concerned, and which has been severely criticised in the course of this debate and by the Leader of the Opposition in the speech which he made last week in the Albert Hall. I mean the clause which establishes a central education authority for Wales. These criticisms are based on a total misapprehension of the real meaning of the clause. Whether that is the fault of the clause or the fault of the critics will appear when we come to discuss the clause. At any rate, it carries out the intention of the Government. I should not refer to this matter of detail were it not clear that it is to be made to play a great part in the attempt to create prejudice against the Bill. What is the origin of the clause? The Leader of the Opposition seems to assume that it is simply a conspiracy on the part of the Nonconformists of Wales to secure the control of education, to be independent altogether of the Imperial Parliament, and to trample upon the rights of Churchmen. The real fact is that this clause was the result of a conference on education that was summoned by the Tory corporation of Cardiff. The lord mayor, a strong Churchman and a Conservative candidate, was in the chair. His Motion was a purely educational one. The conference was summoned for the purpose of deciding whether or not there should be an appeal to the Government to set up a national council in Wales for the administration of education—primary, secondary, and university. To that conference men of all Parties and creeds in Wales were summoned. The four Anglican Bishops were summoned, and three attended. The two Catholic Bishops were summoned, and both were present. Every Conservative candidate for a Welsh seat was summoned, and most of them attended. At this conference, so representative, a Resolution was unanimously passed in favour of asking the Government to set up this central council for the control and direction of education in Wales. Wales is too quiet a country and too loyal a country to attract that public attention which would otherwise be given to its movements. The result is that any one may say anything he likes about Wales, knowing that he is appealing to an audience which is ignorant about the elementary facts of the country. I think it is most unfair that a statesman in the position of the Leader of the Opposition, who ought to know better, who should have a certain sense of responsibility in such a grave matter, should have endeavoured to mislead the country about a thing as to which the simplest inquiries would have shown him that his statements were unfounded. You would imagine from the speech of the Leader of the Opposition that this was an attempt to set up an independent Parliament in Wales.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): So far as education is concerned.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The right hon. Gentleman is still under that impression. I do not think the Leader of the Opposition has a right to criticise a proposal, at least, until he has read it. The right hon. Gentleman cannot have read the first line if he is still under that misapprehension. There is not the smallest power to legislate on the smallest detail to be vested in this council. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman was grossly unfair and misleading to the country. Welsh opinion is on the whole unanimously in favour of this Welsh council. There may be differences of detail about it, and I do not mean among the Welsh Members. For instance, with regard to the question of the unfairness of handing over to a Welsh council the administration of trusts relating to voluntary schools, if there is an Amendment of that sort moved, if the Opposition consider that the guarantees in the clause are not satisfactory in that respect, we shall have no hesitation at all in accepting such an amendment. We realise that it would not be fair after the bitter controversy in Wales to hand over to a body representing the Welsh county councils things that are in controversy at the present moment. If guarantees are required we do not demand that the matter should be left to an Order in Council, but we will accept any Amendment in Committee in order to ensure that nothing of the sort shall occur. The opposition to this clause, however, does not come from Welsh Conservatives or Welsh Churchmen; it comes from the noble Lord who represents Maidstone. [AN HON. MEMBER: At present.] There was not a single Welsh candidate who got up to protest against it; on the contrary, they voted for it. I sincerly trust that the Opposition will not take advantage of the fact that Wales is small, and the number of its members not large, in order to thwart a scheme which all parties in Wales are anxious for in the interests of Welsh education. All we ask for is that we should be able to co-ordinate all branches of education. We have complete control of secondary education, and also of higher education, but primary education is controlled from Whitehall, so far as administration is concerned. It is most important to us that they should all fit in, and for this adequate reason, that Wales is a country where four-fifths of the children in the secondary schools come straight from the primary schools. To talk of the disruption of the Empire because of this proposal is simply part of that gross and futile exaggeration which has gone on about the whole of this Bill. Such talk is an illustration of the barren and stupid leadership which has left the Tory Party without a single representative in Wales. I was very much struck by an observation made by the hon. Member for North Camberwell last night. He said that the problem was insoluble. Well, I too think it is almost insoluble. The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech at Cambridge, claimed that we should have a logical settlement. How long has he been an advocate of a logical settlement? Was there much logic in the settlement of 1902? It is much easier to be logical in criticism than in action. From no point of view was the settlement of 1902 logical. In one parish you had a State school to which every child was driven, Nonconformist as well as Church child, and the whole management was in the hands of one creed. Everybody contributed, yet Nonconformity was as much a disqualification for the position of teacher as if it was an offence against law or morals. That is not defended now. I have read a good many letters which have been written on this Bill. Most of the writers admit that the solution of 1902, was an unfair one in such parishes. I wish they had spoken out at the time. They were perfectly willing to take advantage of the unfairness, perfectly ready to profit by it. They made no attempt to help us to remove the injustice; the only denominational gentlemen who did so were the members from Ireland. The hon. Member for East Mayo at the time, at any rate, did recognise the grievance, but from the majority of the supporters of the Bill of 1902, we had not even an admission until now.

MR A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. I can only say that over and over again I stated *ad nauseam* in the course of the prolonged debates on the Bill of 1902, that it was not a complete settlement of the question, and that it was a hardship in single-school areas. I did not deny it for a moment, but I said over and over again that there was a corresponding hardship in urban areas. It never occurred to me for one moment to suggest to the House that the single-school area condition was a satisfactory one, and I did provide something in the nature of a remedy when I allowed local authorities to build schools of their own, which they were not allowed to do under the Act of 1870.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Then the offence of the right hon. Gentleman is worse than I characterised it. He now says that he recognised and admitted the grievance, but, knowing it, he legislated without making any active provision to meet it. That is an aggravation of the offence. The right hon. Gentleman says that there was a corresponding grievance of Churchmen in urban areas. That grievance was that the Churchman has to support what he calls undenominational religion of which he does not approve. Therefore, because one set of Churchman were getting more than their due in one parish, it was to be met by another set of Churchmen getting less than their due in another. And that is a logical solution. Was the Kenyon-Slaney arrangement a logical one? That is putting two men on a denominational foundation, and of course it is always assumed that the local authorities will select atheists of the rankest kind. What for? To settle the syllabus of religious instruction in the school; and yet in that very school where atheists can settle the syllabus the most religious Nonconformist in the land could not teach the syllabus. And you call that a logical settlement. So much for the logic of that settlement. I do not think the Leader of the Opposition is proud of it. There are, I think, four logical settlements. There is, first, the purely secular system. That is a logical settlement. The second is the frankly denominational all round. That, too, is logical. Thirdly, there is the common religious syllabus, which also is logical. But there is a fourth settlement. You may frankly say you cannot have any common religious syllabus between Protestant and Catholic, and that is the settlement you have in Germany, in Quebec, in Holland. It is a recognition that there are fundamental differences you cannot solve—which are absolutely insoluble. Whether it is just or not, that also would be logical.

If the House will bear with me I will state how the Government have come to the conclusion that the proposal in the Bill is the only solution we can propound under the circumstances, having regard not merely to the logic but, what is stronger than logic, the facts of the situation. Now, take the secular solution. Does any one in this House believe that it would be possible for any Government to propose a secular system for this country? [A voice, "Yes."] I am perfectly certain they could not. Even my hon. friends who believe in secular instruction know perfectly well it could not be carried. Why, take even Birmingham which was the very centre of the agitation for secular instruction in 1870. What happened there? The secularists were beaten there, the right hon. Gentleman was beaten in his own city. If the religion of Mahomet is unacceptable in Mecca, how can you expect it to be received in places where the shrine has fallen into disrepute? You cannot carry the secular system, and I do not argue it. Let us take the frankly denominational system. I admit that here is a suggestion which you have to examine carefully; but it is not altogether the Act of 1902. It is a very different thing. Hon. Members opposite are too fond of assuming that they are defending a logical and just educational denominational system. ["No, no."] Very well, I will not press the point. But it is not the system of 1902. Under the frankly denominational system you are going to set up a denominational system in this country, and it is to be a national system, a denominational system all round. They seem to think that it will mean denominational privileges for Roman Catholics, Jews, Anglicans, and Wesleyans, but not for anybody else. ["No, no."] I am glad to hear that disclaimer. We have had, however, a new doctrine set up about religious instruction—the doctrine of the right of the parent. It is a perfectly new doctrine, as far as the general controversy is concerned. When was it discovered? Was it discovered before 1902? If so, where is it in the Act of that year?

Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover): In Clause 9.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is a different thing; that is not the right of the parent, but the right of the sect. I am now discussing the right of the parent, the inalienable right of a parent to demand of the State that it shall bring up his child in his own faith. What happened in 1902? I recollect one or two very useful discussions on the Act of 1902, one initiated by the hon. Member for East Mayo, and the hon. Member for Morley. Both hon. Members wanted the parents' right to be recognised in the denominational schools. The House must not forget that the whole basis of the claim for denominational instruction is not the right of the denomination, but the right of the parent. How are the denominational syllabuses settled at the present moment? Four foundation managers settle the syllabus for the religious instruction which every child shall receive in the school. Who are the managers? The clergyman, *ex officio*, the great landlord, probably two great landlords, and the others are probably men of position and substance, who contribute largely to the funds of the school and the parish, but not one of them in all probability sending his child to the school. Observing this, my hon. friend the Member for Morley asked, "What about the right of the parent to choose the religious instruction?" He thereupon moved that the parent should have one representative—only one—out of the six on the board that was to choose the religious teaching for his child. What did the right hon. Gentleman, what did the champions of the rights of the parents say? "Not one." They would not have a single representative, although they wanted to know what was the particular brand of theology the parent wanted to be given to his child. In a voice choked with emotion they said, "This is an interference with the inalienable right of the parent." Where, then, was the parent in 1902? I remember the hon. Member for East Mayo, representing sincere denominationalism, saying that in rural districts where there is no choice for the parent he should have, at any rate, some voice in settling the kind of religious teaching his child should receive. The law drives the child to these schools, no matter what the religious instruction is; but when my hon. friend claimed a voice for the parent these present champions of the parent went solidly into the lobby, wiping him out and treating the parent as one of those lay figures who are always introduced when they want to perpetrate a job for their own class.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): The whole Radical Party voted for the parent then.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I agree.

Mr. DILLON: I do not mention this by way of reproach, but as a compliment.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The hon. Member is a keen debater, and I am coming to that point by-and-by. But the attitude of the present champions of the parent among the Opposition simply came to this. Do you want to do something for the landlord? Not at all; it is the poor farmer. For the brewer? Not at all; it is the poor suffering publican. Is it a Bill for the clergy? Not at all; it is the poor parent. These excuses are always trotted out on these occasions for the purpose of controversy; but when you apply to them a genuine test what becomes of them? They disappear. The right hon. Gentleman did not talk much about the parent then. He will do so now because it suits his purpose. The right hon. Member for Dover cries "Clause 9." But that is a clause saying that if thirty parents make a demand they can have schools set up. He forgets the whole of the clause, however, for the words are added, "subject to educational efficiency and economy." Rates first, the conscience of the parent comes last. Clause 9, indeed, is our case. We say that educational efficiency and economy forbid the possibility of experimenting wholesale in denominational instruction in this country. I recollect an application made under the late Government by Churchmen in Merioneth. Their application was rightly refused, for they were told that if they took thirty children from the village school they would destroy the efficiency of the school. You cannot go on keeping two schools in a little village where there are only 100 children altogether, and, therefore, it was right for the Department to say that educational efficiency and economy must come first. The late Government recognised that the thing was absolutely unworkable. If you have a frankly denominational system you must give the same right to every denomination. But the assumption is made that no one holds dogmas except the Church of England and the Roman Catholics. You have to assume, however, that the Nonconformists have dogmas and that they differ one from the other, though it is also assumed that you can lump their dogmas together. But Nonconformists have their sects and dogmas which divide them.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E): Has the right hon. Gentleman never heard of the Free Church Catechism?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is a catechism which I believe members of the Church of England are glad to teach in many cases where there is a Church majority on the council schools, in Liverpool for instance. But there, again, the inference from the interruption of the noble Lord is that, although we pretend to have dogmas that divide us, after all, what does it matter? It is only the difference between you and us that matters. The real chasm is between Dives and Lazarus, which you cannot bridge over; it is between the Church and Nonconformity. That is an assumption with a touch of arrogance in it. The Nonconformist sects have given the best pledge in the world as to the sincerity of their belief in their own individual dogmas. There is as great a sectarian patriotism among them as there is in the Church of England. What have they done? It is not easy to be a Nonconformist and to stand to your dogma in the rural villages. What is the state of the rural villages in England? All the people upon whom your living depends go to the village church. Two or three big members of the community may, and often do, make life intolerable for you. That is not a matter for amusement, but a pretty serious fact. Who, as a rule, are those who attend Nonconformist places of worship? They are generally artisans and labourers. [Cries of "And farmers."] Yes, in Wales the farmers. At any rate the powerful people of these villages as a rule are members of the Church of England, and the others know very well, when they pass the village church to their own little chapel, that they are offending people who can ruin their prosperity. I can give cases in Wales where they have done so. I am speaking of what I know, but I do not wish to enter upon that. No man goes to a Nonconformist place of worship unless he really has a great attachment to the organisation and the doctrines that are taught there. Well, now, what right has anyone to assume that the dogmas of the powerful Chuch matter everything in the world and that the dogmas of the poor despised chapel do not count? "What does it matter?" you say. "Lump them into a Free Church Catechism." I contend that if you give a right to any one denomination you must give it to all

EARL PERCY (Kensington, S): Why not?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Because of Clause 9, and economy and efficiency to begin with. Has the noble Lord ever studied the educational problem in a little rural district? Suppose you have three or four sects there, as in the case of a parish in Merioneth, with a population of 500, that came up for investigation. There were two schools there, one denominational and the other undenominational, the larger having only thirty-two children in it. There you have the expense doubled. You have two headmasters; two separate equipments; and instead of getting one fairly good man, you get two underpaid men. Yet it is only by lumping all the Nonconformists together that you get no more than two schools. Suppose that each Nonconformist sect had a separate school

EARL PERCY: Why should they have separate schools?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Why should a Nonconformist have a right to anything, except to pay the rates and make the rents? It is their business to obey the law, and it is the business of the Anglican to make it and profit by it. Why should not the Methodists and the Congregationalists have their own schools as well as the Anglicans? From a sectarian point of view it would be an advantage to them. They are a poor community, and it would be a great thing for them to have a trained and educated man with leisure to look after the Sunday school, to be church secretary, to play the organ, and to organise the evening meetings. It is only because they are sufficiently patriotic—[Cries of "Oh."] Yes; Merioneth has rated itself for education a great deal higher than any other county in the kingdom. It has built more schools and spent more money; and its secondary schools, which it was not bound to rate itself for, are in greater proportion than in any other county. The Nonconformists saw that if each sect claimed a school of its own educational efficiency would be destroyed. It is bad enough to divide a little community of children, who will have to work together when they grow up, into two antagonistic camps. The case is not like that of Holland, where practically you have two great sects—the Calvinists and the Catholics—or like parts of Germany, where you have Lutherans and Catholics side by side. It is not like Quebec. There the problem would be easy. But here there is only one way, and that is having some sort of common school for all sects; for above all the business of the State is not to bring up sectarians, but to train up good citizens, and the only way to do that is by having good schools.

We say that the best solution is a common syllabus. I recognise the Catholic difficulty. But first of all as to the objections of the Church of England, or of certain sections of the Church, to a common syllabus. They say that Cowper-Temple religion is Nonconformist religion. To say that is simply to ignore the whole history of the Cowper-Temple clause. Who forced the Cowper-Temple clause into an Act of Parliament? Churchmen, against the protests of all the Nonconformist leaders who wanted secular education. I think that Churchmen were right, and that this action is to their credit and glory. Who forced Bible teaching into practically every board school election in England and Wales? The Anglican Church; and again I think the Church was right, and that the Nonconformists were wrong. But, at any rate, it was the Church that did it. Take Birmingham. They beat the Nonconformist leaders there, and forced Bible instruction on the schools. In London, Liverpool, Manchester, and gradually even in Wales they got Bible-teaching introduced. They have beaten secularism. They have fought tenaciously for religious instruction, for Cowper-Temple teaching in the schools. They cannot turn round now—and the majority of Churchmen do not—and say, "This is Nonconformity. This is not our religion. The Bible! That is not our Book." [Cries of "Oh!"] Well, they cannot have it both ways. It is they who have forced it into the syllabus of our schools. Nearly every syllabus in England has been drafted by Churchmen. I do not believe you can produce 20 per cent. of the syllabuses that were not prepared by Churchmen. They have prepared them in London and most of the great school boards; and in Wales there is hardly a case where the parish clergyman has not sat upon the committee and agreed with the Nonconformists in the preparation of the syllabus. Who teaches the syllabus? Two-thirds of the teachers are Churchmen. I ask hon. Gentlemen, who challenge these syllabuses as if they were Nonconformist catechisms, can they point out a single syllabus in England or Wales where there is a line that is repugnant to the conscience of Churchmen? Can they point to a single syllabus in which anything is taught that is contrary to any dogma of the Church of England? That is more than they can say for the catechism, which is a denominational book. But there is this to be said about the Cowper-Temple religion as it is called. It is Protestant. I was struck very much by the speech of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, who read a striking document stating the position of Catholics towards religion, and their views of the Bible and the Protestant doctrine of freedom of judgment. But is that the attitude of Churchmen towards the Bible and freedom of judgment? The Bishop of Birmingham treats the Bible as a sort of creation of the Church. But that is not the attitude of Anglicans generally. The vast majority take the Protestant view; but you have a position which seems almost irreconcilable. If the Anglican Communion would frankly take its place at the head of Protestantism in England there would be no difficulty to be solved. There is not a part of the Empire or of the world where it does not, except here. What happens in Canada? There you frankly divide the community into Protestant and Catholic. The Anglican registers himself as a Protestant invariably, together with the Wesleyan, the Presbyterian, the Baptist, and the Congregationalist. The whole trouble comes from the fact that there are many Churchmen who repudiate this Protestant association; and there is a touch of meanness in it; for it makes the position of the Catholic, whose position is irreconcilable with Cowper-Templeism, exceedingly difficult. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to imagine that this Bill was a monstrous attack upon the Church because we cannot recognise that each sect should be established. It seems to me that sectarian differences are largely artificial in Protestant churches. It is perfectly true that there was a time when these dogmas did represent the real differences, but the fences have become decayed and there is a good deal more intercourse now in the matter of doctrine than in the old days, and the real difference in the Protestant Church is not a difference between one sect and another but a difference between the advanced theologian and the one who sticks by the old ideas. The difference is really the same as you get in politics; it is the difference you get in politics between the Liberal and the Conservative—the difference between the man who progresses and——

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Which is the man who progresses?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The right hon. Gentleman is asking me to embark upon a subject which I really dare not. He can pick theologians from half-a-dozen denominations and say that those represent one class of thought, not because they belong to one sect, but because they represent the views of one class of theology—call it advanced theology, or revolutionary theology, if you like, but at all events, it represents the difference between Liberal and Conservative schools of thought. I will take three men who differ absolutely about this Bill, namely, the Bishop of Birmingham, Canon Henson, and Dr. Clifford. If you set these three theologians to write a manual for a school for the religious training of the children you would probably find that there is very little difference between them. I have no doubt that when my statement comes to their knowledge they will all repudiate it. Therefore, there is no real division upon this question between denominations, because the fences have been broken down. There would be no difficulty in the matter if you had a clearly defined issue between the sects upon matters of doctrine and dogma, but you have not got it. What the right hon. Gentleman sees in England is only part of a general movement which occurs in every democratic country in the world. There are three great democratic countries, namely, America, France, and England. What do you see in France? It is a great Catholic country, and what have they done with the schools? What have they done with the established Catholic religion? [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: The Freemasons have done it.] They had an election fought there substantially upon the same issue—the issue of clericalism. What happened there?

Exactly the same thing as in a Protestant country. Go to America. That is a country to which Catholics flee from the tyranny of denominational countries like Germany and this country. They go to America for liberty. What do they get there in denominational instruction? They would not get a four-fifths clause. America would not look at it.

AN HON. MEMBER: They have separate schools for that.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Not quite. They read the Bible in the schools there and there was an increasing demand for it. There is the same thing here. It is part of a great movement. Democracy has come to the conclusion that clericalism is its enemy. It is no use saying that this is hatred towards an individual Church. It is the instinct of three great democratic peoples moving in the same direction towards what they believed to be real liberty of conscience and the only guarantee for continuity of liberty of conscience. I am not minimising the issue. There is a great issue between us which we cannot, I fear, bridge over. What is it? There are things we agree upon. We agree that education is not merely the training of the intellect and the cramming of the mind with knowledge. We agree that it is the business of the State also to train and discipline the conscience. There is a great common ground for agreement. I think there is agreement that this can be done on the basis of Christian morality. But where we differ is this: We differ on the question of whether it is necessary in order to teach Christian ethics to a child to inculcate the doctrine of any sect. That is the difference. It is the position taken by the people of this country. I think it is a definite and clear stand they have taken, fully realising what they are doing. It is wonderful how the instinct of the people has been guided between the two extremes through the whole of this controversy for thirty years. First of all, the secular solution. They rejected it. Then came the other extreme, the right hon. Gentleman's Bill—extreme sectarianism. They rejected that. But the people have made up their minds to take their stand and to rally round the Bible. They are anxious that it should be placed in the hands of their children, believing that acquaintance with its contents will make those children better men and better women. Not only that, but that its principles will help to bring about a better condition of things for them to live in than their parents ever knew. The true parental demand is this: that no ecclesiastic or politician should be allowed to stand between the child and the light of the great Book which saved England from darkness, and which will continue to illumine the gloom that oppresses human life, after the last sect shall have vanished from the scene.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): The right hon. Gentleman has told the House generally what he considers is the solution of the educational problem of the present day. I had hoped to have heard from him a somewhat detailed defence of a Bill which, if one might judge from the debate of last night, needs a good deal of defence not only from the attacks of the Opposition, but also from the nominal supporters of the Government. The Bill no doubt offers many points of attack, and I think the attack of yesterday was hardly adequately met by the very general and very interesting discussion on the state of theological opinion in this country, in Europe and in America, which we have heard from the President of the Board of Trade. This Bill, unlike the measure of 1902, can hardly be said to be an Education Bill. The Bill of 1902 was an Education Bill. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh"] It was a great scheme for bringing education of every type and kind under the control of the local authority in every area. To put it in two or three words, it was a Bill for municipalising education. The House occupied many months in discussing not the great features of the Bill, but the terms under which the voluntary schools were to come into this system. I am happy to think that the great structure created by the Act of 1902 will be left intact, although modifications will no doubt be made in this Bill before it becomes law as to the terms under which the voluntary schools are to exist. The Act of 1902 was attacked last night and to-day. It was attacked last night because it conferred privileges. I deny that the Act of 1902 conferred any privileges whatever. It is said that it conferred privileges on the Church of England by making certain requirements on the teachers. The Act of 1902 imposed no tests on the teacher, and imposed no requirements of any such character on the teacher. It imposed no sectarian disabilities. What disabilities were imposed on the teacher were the result of trust deeds which the Act of 1902 did much to relax. The trust deeds in many of the schools required that all the teachers should be members of the Church of England. The Act of 1902 left it to the managers to employ the teachers of other denominations, except in the case of the head teacher and always subject to the interests of the child. It was said last night that the Act of 1902 conferred privileges on the training colleges. The Act of 1902 did nothing for the training colleges in the way of privilege. Training colleges built by the denominations continued to receive after 1902 the grants they received before then, and there was absolutely no obligation laid upon any local authority to give rate aid to any denominational college. We have heard yesterday and to-day questions as to how far the Act of 1902 dealt satisfactorily with the single school areas in regard to the rights of parents in those areas. I think my right hon. friend the Member for the City will admit that the single school area presented difficulties which were not adequately solved by the Act of 1902. But what was the proposed solution of the then Opposition? It was that one or two parents should be chosen for the board of management by the parents of all the other children attending school in the area. The objection to that was, that in the first instance it created the difficulty of a shifting constituency and of discovering who were the parents entitled to vote. In the next place there is always great difficulty in getting a constituency of this sort to vote when its votes are required. In the school board elections there were seldom 50 per cent. and sometimes barely 25 per cent. of the voters who went to the poll. It was very difficult also to get people to manage these rural schools, and when the right hon. Gentleman gave a description of the inadequate management of a rural school in which the clergyman was an *ex officio* manager under the trust deed, and the great landowner acted with him, I could not help thinking that he must be very little familiar with the process of managing the rural schools, at any rate in a great part of England. The Act of 1902 was an Education Act. This is an Omnibus Act. It is the work evidently of many hands and of many influences. I see in one part the work of the Free Church Council; in another part the National Union of Teachers; and in another again, the Welsh Party. Here and there, no doubt, education furtively creeps in, and the President of the Board of Education may be observed as having had some influence in the composition of the Bill. But I maintain that this is an Omnibus Bill and not an Education Bill. It deals with education here and there as affected by various political influences thoughout the country.

Then we are told that the Bill is the result of a mandate. If anything was before the electors of this country it was I suppose a mandate to secure complete popular control of the schools, and the abolition of tests for teachers. I am not aware from the answers given to my right hon. friend to-day that any tests for teachers which were in existence before are abolished by this Bill, but when we are told of a mandate, surely it is not so very long ago that the Government invited us here to assent to a proposition that the issue before the country at the general election was the issue of free trade. Nothing then was said of any other topic such as this topic of elementary education. I am bound to say that, although I have no doubt that political Nonconformists and the Teachers' Union did in places exercise their influence and did endeavour to secure the return of Members who would vote for the two issues described, if the Education Act of 1902 had any serious influence on the election that influence was due not to what is called its sectarian character, but owing to the increase in the rate which it involved thoughout the country.

Let me deal with one or two of the salient features of the Bill. Before I pass to the matter which is more pertinent to the Bill, I will say that the right hon. Gentleman has told us something about the Welsh council. What he tells us is that the council is entirely subject to Parliament. I suppose there is no institution in the United Kingdom or the Empire which is not subject to the Imperial Parliament, and I do not think that anyone of us supposed that the Crown, Lords, and Commons could not take up, recast, abolish, or alter in any way the proposed council for Wales. What I do want to know is who is to be responsible for the action of this council? The powers and duties of the Board of Education and of the Board of Agriculture are to be handed over to it.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The council takes over the education powers of the Board of Agriculture.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I never supposed that the council would deal with agriculture except in regard to education. I really think that the right hon. Gentleman might have understood my remark, because it was obvious what the meaning was. All those powers are to be handed over to the council. The money which the Board of Education receives for educational purposes in Wales is to be handed over to the council, and what I want to know is this. Supposing this Welsh council does some act which may be considered an injustice, or is guilty of some neglect of duty, or any of the local authorities subject to it commits some breach of duty, or any educational vagary occurs which may disturb persons interested in education in this House, to whom are we to refer? Are we to refer to the President of the Board of Trade? The one person to whom we should not refer is the President of the Board of Education; he will have done his duty when he has handed over the money. He cannot take it back or control its use. He can smile in the presence of inquiry if the taxpayer wonders how the money has gone, or if it is an educationist who wants to know something of the education which is being given. Where is the responsibility for the action of this council? I may say in passing that, fully as I recognise the importance of what is called co-ordination of all branches of education in Wales, I believe there is nothing that can be done by this council which could not have been done under the Act of 1902 by means of a joint Committee of the various local authorities.

Another small point is the abolition of the register. The abolition of the register involves great hardship which I think is hardly recognised by this House. Students have for the last four years been qualifying for this register at some cost of time and money, and they have deferred the commencement of their professional career in order to qualify for it. I understand from an Answer given by the President of the Board of Education before Easter that the conditions of the register are offensive to the elementary teacher. The elementary teacher is to be considered because of the political influence of the Teachers Union, but the students, many of whom are women, are comparatively insignificant. We know that some of these young students will suffer if the register is to go. The President of the Board of Education was good enough to tell me the other day, when I asked what compensation was to be given to the poor teachers who had given their time and money in vain, that the knowledge and experience which they had acquired ought to be compensation. Suppose that the right hon. Gentleman's constituency at Bristol were disfranchised, would it be any consolation to him to be told that the political experience he had acquired contesting the seat and the advantages which he had enjoyed in informing himself on educational subjects during the time he had been in this House ought to be compensation? I think that this goes beyond a reasonable use of the saying that virtue is, or ought to be, its own reward.

I pass over the question of trusts in Part II. because that was dealt with by my right hon. friend the Member for Dover. I will only say that it is a matter which will have to be looked into very carefully in the Committee stage, because there is an element in the Bill which excites suspicion as to the mode in which denominational endowments may be treated. The constitution of the Commission in Section 8 of the Bill and the conditions under which it is to work make us naturally anxious as to how trusts are to be dealt with under the Bill. The action of this Commission is of immense importance to all the voluntary schools, or the greater part of them. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster said yesterday that the voluntary schools would be certain to get denominational facilities, for that was provided under the Bill.

That is not provided under the Bill. There is nothing compulsory in the clauses which deal with denominational facilities except this, that those facilities are not to be given for more than two days in the week, and that they are not to be given by the recognised teachers employed in the schools. As to that portion of the Bill, I really wonder that any Government should have put such a disability on the teacher in a Bill brought forward on a serious occasion such as this. Here are teachers qualified to teach the children and willing to teach, and because they are the recognised teachers of the school they are to be kept clear of denominational teaching. Really I call that a piece of meanness, I might almost say spite, and I shall look forward with a melancholy interest to see how it is to be defended by the President of the Board when that portion of the Bill comes on for discussion. But these facilities are the result of an arrangement, and the local authority may make an arrangement by agreement and can alone initiate such an arrangement, and you must remember that many thousands of the voluntary schools are held under trust, and that many of those trusts are trusts for educational purposes coupled with the proviso that the education is to be given in accordance with the principles of the Church of England. The whole chance of an arrangement to carry out the purposes of the trust must depend on the action of the Commission. What are the powers of the Commission? Their exercise depends on the initiative of the local education authority, which is anxious to make an arrangement convenient to itself. What are the powers of the Board of Education as regards these schemes, apart from the Commission? If a scheme were framed under the Charitable Trusts Acts, there would be an appeal to the Chancery Division and thence to the House of Lords; and if a scheme were framed under the Endowed Schools Acts there would be an appeal to the Privy Council and to Parliament; if under the Education Act of 1870, enlarged as it was by the Endowed Schools Act, there was no appeal, but then the Board could only act on the initiative of the persons interested in the endowment. This Commission has to act on the initiative of the local authority, and there is to be no appeal whatever. Now, what may happen, supposing the Commission choose to construe a trust as providing that education was to be given in accordance with the principles of the Church of England; that the Bill made it impossible to do so; but that they were bound to give elementary education; they could then take the school on their own terms. Does the Government seriously propose, first of all, by the artificial process of the enactments in the Bill, to cheapen the article they want to procure and then to take it on their own terms? There is a very broad hint in the Bill that that is the course that they could take. If that is to be the construction of these trust deeds by this Commission, then I say good-bye to facilities in thousands of cases? At the best, supposing such facilities are given, the Bill is tainted with inequality. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade described the various difficult ecclesiastical, social, and economic questions which were involved in any solution of this question; and to judge from his speeches here and elsewhere it would seem that the difficulty was insoluble. But the Bill now before the House proposed to solve it by indicating one sort of teaching and one sort only to be paid for out of the rates. I ask what sort, and is it provided in the Bill? It is most curious that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster said that Cowper-Temple teaching was provided in the Bill and the President of the Board of Education said that the Cowper-Temple Clause provided for the teaching of the common principles of Christianity. I want to know whether there is any security that anything of that sort will be taught under the provisions of this Bill. As regards the teaching, the Bill proposes to solve the question by endowing one sort of teaching only out of the rates. I ask what sort of teaching, if any? We know perfectly well that in many parts of Wales no religion of any sort is given, and I believe that it is in an increasing number of schools, and more particularly in South Wales.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It is decreasing.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I am glad to hear it; but where no religious teaching is given the parent is helpless and I could take the right hon. Gentleman to a parish in South Wales, where there are two schools and no religious teaching is given in the county council school, while religious teaching is given in the voluntary school, and the Nonconformist parents send their children past the county council school to the voluntary school rather than that they should have no religious instruction whatever. That means that the working classes of this country are averse to secular education ; but in the rural districts they are to be left absolutely helpless if the local authorities choose to forbid the use of the Bible teaching. But supposing we have this Cowper-Temple teaching under the Bill, what does it come to? It is an absolute negation. If you look at the Cowper-Temple clause you will see that no religious formularies are to be used; but subject to this that any doctrine may be taught so long as it is not based on a catechism or formulary. Teaching in regard to the sacrament may be given which would satisfy the highest Catholic doctrine, or the Gospel story may be treated from the point of view of a Unitarian or an Agnostic. No doubt, there are good syllabuses of instruction, but we cannot rely on every local authority to provide good syllabuses. The existence of the admirable syllabus in Hampshire was no excuse for the absence of any religious teaching in the county of Carmarthen. Then we must consider that there are very potent influences on the side of the supporters of the Bill who desire that Bible teaching should be limited to Bible reading. Dr. Clifford, for instance, has maintained from time to time that the Bible should be read and that the teaching of the Bible should be given in a non-credal—non-dogmatic form. That puts the Bible teaching on a lower footing than every other kind of teaching. Every other kind of teaching given to the child is dogmatic. The rules of grammar and of spelling are not matters of private judgment, nor is the multiplication table allowed to be regarded as a series of interesting probabilities. In Bible teaching alone everything is to be regarded as an open question. And that then we must remember that this sort of teaching is to be given in the voluntary schools which were built for the purpose that religious instruction should be given in accordance with the principles of a certain religious society—Anglican, Roman Catholic, or what not ; and these buildings are to be taken and diverted from those purposes for which they were founded, and devoted to a purpose which the hon. Member for Liverpool regards as absolutely hostile to the intentions of the founders, and which the hon. Member for Leicester regards as perfectly useless. Now, I say that the only mode of dealing with this question is to arrange for absolute equality among all denominations as provided for by the Act of 1902. There is no doubt that that is not the equality provided for by this Bill. I do not suppose that the warmest supporters of this Bill will deny that it violates the principle of equality, inasmuch as it takes the religious teaching which is satisfactory to a portion of the community and imposes it upon all. Clause 4 is anything but satisfactory to those who wish for really definite denominational religious instruction. It is precarious in its operation and depends upon the will of the local authority. The right may be taken away by a shifting population which elects the local authority who appoints the teacher. I admit that the teacher is given absolute freedom to decline to give religious teaching. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Hear, hear."] An hon. Member says "Hear, hear," but if you employ a man to do a thing and he declines to do it while retaining his employment, I want to know whether the Bill consecrates a violation of contract? Then Clause 4 is not satisfactory to the hon. Member for Leicester and for a very good reason, Clause 4 does away with the one merit of the Cowper-Temple clause. The one merit of that clause was that it preserved the local authorities from internal dissensions as to the type of religious instruction which they should provide in their schools. Anyone who has served upon a county council when the question of a subscription to a voluntary school under construction comes up for discussion must know that the local authorities may spend hours of time and waste temper on the question whether they will grant this privilege to the four-fifths or not, and the subject will furnish material for irritating controversy at municipal elections. Then it is not satisfactory to the hon. Member for Louth, and so little is it satisfactory to him that he threatened the Government with a recrudescence of that form of martyrdom known as "passive resistance." I should be sorry to contemplate in the future any breach of the law by that very respectable body which the hon. Member for Louth represents, but I have no doubt that if the law is broken the Government will take care to enforce it. I shall rejoice to see the President of the Board of Trade and his colleagues enforcing the law under the circumstances. I shall be inclined to remind him of a line which I remember from my classic studies—

> "Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes."

On the other hand, so satisfactory is this clause to some hon. Members that the hon. Member for North Camberwell wished to amend it and make it a necessary part of the duty of the local authority to carry out the clause, that is to say, the hon. Member for North Camberwell wished to put the friends of the hon. Member for Louth to the necessity of becoming "passive resisters," by enforcing the clause upon the different local authorities. I cannot think that Clause 4 redresses the real grievance created by the Bill, and I cannot think it will be a satisfactory topic of discussion among the local authorities of the country. I wish the Government joy of the result of their efforts to get rid of the useful and wholesome provisions of the Act of 1902.

I asked just now whether the local authority could call upon the teachers to give the teaching which is required with reference to the special circumstances of Clause 4, and I want to know what is the real meaning of the tests to be applied to teachers. I mentioned just now the provision of the trust deeds, which no doubt impose a disability upon head teachers in regard to appointments under them. Frankly, I am opposed to that limitation. All my life long I have been opposed to subscriptions or tests of any sort for holding office, but what we contested when we were discussing the Bill of 1902 was this, that the managers of the local authority were entitled to ask the teacher whether he or she could conscientiously give the religious teaching which was engaged to be given in the school. I am glad to know that that right will not now be withdrawn from the employer, but then I should like to know what is to become of the clause which is supposed to be the teacher's Magna Charta freeing him from all religious tests?

But to turn to another side of this question, if the teacher need not teach, and if the parent need not send his child, during the hours for religious instruction, it is clear that religious instruction is to be placed very much in the background. The President of the Board of Education has said that, for the purposes of the law, school attendance is marked at the beginning of the time fixed for secular instruction. That is not so. School attendance begins at the time fixed for the opening of the school by the local authority. What the President was thinking of, perhaps, was that the Parliamentary grant is only given for secular instruction, and that secular instruction always begins after a reasonable time has been given for religious instruction, and the Board of Education will not sanction a by-law which does not leave time for religious instruction before or after secular instruction. Therefore I cannot understand what is meant by the clause which allows the parent to keep his child away. The President has said it was sanctioned by a by-law that was passed some years ago. That is not so. The parent is bound to send his child during the whole time that the school is open. But if the local authority or the managers are satisfied by the parent in writing that he intends to withdraw his child from religious instruction, then the child need only attend during the time for secular instruction. But this permission is only given where the parent desires the child to receive religious instruction elsewhere. As the law now stands it provides that the child shall be in school during all the school hours. Some years ago a local authority framed a by-law which defined no time for religious education, and only defined a time for secular education. I had some correspondence on the matter, and then I submitted it to Lord Londonderry, who decided that we could not allow a by-law to be passed which left no time for religious instruction. That is not merely a matter of passing interest, because we on this side shall absolutely insist that religious instruction shall be given during the regular school hours. It seems to me that the clause taking religious instruction out of the time of school hours is one of the worst features of the Bill. Something has been said as to the rights of the parents, and the hon. Member for

Leicester said that the parent had no right in regard to the religious instruction of his child, and that the child had a right to demand the protection of the State if the parent imposed or required religious instruction of which the child disapproved. My impression is that if a child went to its parent with that view and expressed it, the matter would be settled otherwise than by argument. Dr. Clifford objects to the parent's having any voice in the matter as regards the religious education of his children under the four-fifths clause. He said the parent would be in the position of a plural voter. He would have a vote in the election of the local education authority, and then he wanted a further vote in regard to the religious education to be given in the school and that this would give him an undue privilege. That means, if it means anything, that the parent ought to have no rights whatever in regard to the religious instruction of his child. By-laws which have prevailed since the Act of 1870, approved by the Board of Education, give the parent the right to insist that religious instruction shall be given during the school hours, and to withdraw his child from religious instruction if the religious instruction given is not of the kind which he approves. We claim that he should have the opportunity of obtaining for his child the religious teaching which he desires. That will be insisted upon by the Opposition again and again during the progress of the Bill. I oppose the Bill, because it is a wanton interference with a settlement which is working well throughout the country, except where political efforts are made to disturb it, because it imposes injustices on denominations, and because it violates the right of the parent to decide as to the religious instruction of his child. The President of the Board of Education has said that minorities must suffer. I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for putting the matter so frankly. I understand then that the motto of the Nonconformist party is "the spoils to the victor." The right hon. Gentleman has given the Opposition an excellent weapon for improving their position in the country, and of ceasing to be a minority perhaps earlier than would have been the case if the Bill had not been introduced. But, minority or not, the struggle must go on. There is no peace in the Bill. The Opposition will endeavour to bring into every home in England the knowledge of the injustice and tyranny which the Bill proposes to inflict, and, though we may be beaten in this House or even in this Parliament, the struggle will not then be over. Few as we now are in the House I believe we shall win in the end, for our cause is the cause of liberty, justice, and right.

MR. ALFRED HUTTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Morley): In opposing this Bill, the right hon. Baronet used very strong language. He spoke of the injustice and tyranny which he was going to combat. But I am not sure that the right hon Baronet, or any one else, will ever devise any Bill dealing with the religious difficulty that will not impose some injustice and tyranny on some denomination. The right hon. Baronet began his speech by trying to escape the charge made by my hon. friend the Member for North Camberwell that the Act of 1902 did work considerable injustice as between different denominations. All the injustices, whether they existed before 1902 or not, were magnified under the Act of that year by their being paid for out of the rates without full public control being given, and the right hon. Baronet tried to avoid the charge that when the late Government provided the expenses of these injustices, they ought to have provided for full control. Before I allude to the question of the religious difficulty, I should like to say that I am very sorry the Bill has not dealt more widely with the question of secondary education. The only thing it has done for secondary education is to remove the limit of twopence on the rates. We have, after all, had some experience of the movement of local authorities in the direction of secondary education, and I think a small extension might have been given, first of all by the removal of some of the conditions imposed by the Act of 1902, and secondly by enabling the local authority to obtain more control over the provided schools.

Another matter which I am sorry has not been more adequately dealt with in this Bill is the matter of administrative reform. Everyone who knows anything of the working of the county councils is aware of the difficulty of administering the Act of 1902. We are told that by that

Act we have municipalised education. At all events, we have officialised it. Teachers are now subject to bombardment by circulars which are so frequent that it is impossible for them to keep up with the instructions they receive, and they are visited by inspectors so numerous that it is almost impossible for them to remember the instructions. It is important that some new authority should be established which should have the management of the schools, and which should be able to take some amount of responsibility for the administration of education over the area. There is the further omission, that I must mention, to deal with teachers' training colleges. The Minister for Education is probably aware that during the course of the debates on the Bill of 1902, those of us who were attacking the Government at the time came near to defeating the then Government on the question of the training colleges and the abolition of tests in the training colleges. We received on that occasion most generous treatment from the House, and at that time the House was willing to take a considerable step in that direction. I think it is right that with regard to that, something should be done in this Bill. It is most desirable that in some way the question of the training and the probation of teachers should be brought within the four corners of this Bill, that we should have some opportunity of discussing it, that we should not merely be told that the county council will do all that is necessary and that we are to leave it to them, with the certain knowledge that nothing will be done.

The proposals of this Bill have been attacked in two directions. They have been attacked in the first place because they establish a new religion. I am surprised that that attack should have come from hon. Gentlemen opposite. They say it is a tyranny to establish a new religion. But if it is a tyranny to establish a new religion, I do not see that it is not tyranny to continue to maintain an old religion. In the second place, they attack the Bill because of what they call the confiscation of property. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, who opened the attack upon the Bill, demanded two things. He demanded, in the first place, that the State should be neutral towards all denominations in the interests of religious liberty, and, in the second place, that all denominations should have equal treatment and should above all be provided with some amount of State support I say the State cannot be neutral towards all denominations where it is providing the opportunity and the means by which each denomination is to carry on its religious teaching. The only way in which it can be neutral is to have nothing whatever to do with any denomination, but to let each go its own way and provide its own means to carry on its religious teaching. The second demand is from all the supporters of the Act of 1902, and the argument is that we shall move further in the direction of concurrent endowments. It must be obvious to everybody who has made a study of religious endowments that concurrent endowment is by no means the same thing as religious liberty. In endowing each religion you are bound to do some injustice, and directly you work injustice you are establishing grievances and hardships; you are preserving not the interests of religion but the interests of denominations and sects. I believe if this House were to take any further step in the direction of concurrent endowments we should meet with the same result as the late Government in their Act of 1902. When the extreme view of concurrent endowments was put before the people, it was condemned by the country at large. Obviously, unless the principle of concurrent endowments is carried to its logical conclusion, it is bound to end in injustice, and as we cannot carry that principle to its logical conclusion, the President of the Board of Education has endeavoured to find another solution. He proposes to divide the country into Protestants and Catholics. I do not think he will succeed. The four-fifths clause does not carry that out now, and by his own proposals the right hon. Gentleman does not draw the line of demarcation between the Protestants and Catholics, which he admits would be the logical conclusion, but says that if one section of the Catholics of England choose to say that they do not accept what is called simple Bible teaching, that it is offensive to their consciences, then it is a matter of justice on the part of the State not to press it. But the only alternative is that the State shall hold its hand in the case of all denominational teaching. It is very extraordinary to me that the right hon. Gentleman should have changed his mind. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that if the Nonconformists who stood in 1870 for secular education had stood out we should never have heard of the Act of 1902, and we should never have been in the position in which we are to-day. The right hon. Baronet spoke of there being no peace in this Bill. I do not myself believe there is peace in it, and I do not know that any Bill which insists upon denominational teaching in the schools will ever bring peace to the Government and the administration. Only one result can come from all these controversies, and that is that the State shall say that secular education shall hold the day. I may, I know, in saying this, be accused of religious indifference. Lord Hugh Cecil made many appeals to the Nonconformists to fight the religious indifference of the day, but I venture to say that the question will not be fought out by Churchmen and Nonconformists standing together to fight it out in the schools. If religious indifference exists to-day it exists largely because the parent can throw his responsibility very largely on the shoulders of the State official in the schools. If parents had been made to feel their responsibilities in this matter from 1870 onward we should not have to fight this question to-day. The hon. Member for North Camberwell, replying last night to the hon. Member for Leicester, said that if we had secular education the result would be that thousands of children would go without religious teaching. They might for a short time. But is not that the opportunity of the Church? I believe the throwing by the parents of their responsibility in this matter upon the State and the local authorities to be the cause of the religious indifference of to-day. No; we are going to fight it, as the President of the Board of Trade says, by a great rally round the Bible. We are to have this rally round the Bible, and we are to have this Bible teaching in all the schools. Clause 4 will be a big price to give. When I heard my right hon. friend on the First Reading I thought that Clause 4 would be a clause that could be accepted by us with the intention of enabling the Government to get over a very difficult situation. But what kind of reception has it received? I am bound to say that the reception it has received at the hands of those for whom it was made has changed the view of a very great many Nonconformists, and many who were favourable at first have had their opinions very considerably changed. I know, in regard to the teacher, at any rate, many would make a very determined fight in order to remove the test which is bound to be imposed on the teacher in order that the intention of Clause 4 should be carried through. If it were to bring peace even for ten years I would accept the clause as it stands, but if the clause is to become mandatory it would change my view and that of many of my friends, and I cannot conceive that any Government would add to their difficulties, as they necessarily would, by making Clause 4 not optional but obligatory. Many Nonconformists who would take every opportunity of meeting legitimate claims, if they were allowed to do it at their own free will, would never accept such a clause as this if made obligatory. All these claims are based upon what? We are asked to accept now the indefeasable and inalienable right of the parent to have his children taught in his own religion—yes, but at the public expense. When did this right become a natural right? In the first place, it is not a historic right of the Church of England. It is certainly not a historic right of the Roman Catholic Church. Neither of these two churches have ever taught that. It has certainly not been a historic doctrine of either church that the parents had a right to bring their children to be taught religion at the expense of the State. We admit the right of the parent to teach his children religion at his own expense, but there is no such natural right to have them taught religion at the expense of the State. We have only had free education since about the year 1890, and it was not until then thought that it was the natural right of the parent to have instruction at the entire expense of the State, and certainly that did not include religious education. If this claim is to be insisted upon we must have some justification for it. I have often heard the claim made, but I have never heard an argument in its favour. I have said that I do not think this Bill if it becomes an Act is likely to be a permanent settlement, but I do think it is a great and valuable step towards the final settlement of this question, and I can only conclude by expressing my firm conviction that the difficulty can never be finally settled so long as secular education is allowed to be mixed up with religious teaching. Ultimately that settlement will have to come. In the meantime I think this Bill will make a very considerable step forward.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): I may excuse myself for addressing the House by saying that I happen to have had a somewhat prolonged experience upon this subject. For forty sessions in three Legislatures in different countries I have witnessed and taken some part in the discussion of problems which arise in their concrete form by the association of a Protestant majority with a Roman Catholic minority. Long ago I found and took my ground upon general principles, and having adhered to that ground I was rather pained when I heard from the lips of the Minister of Education the other day a statement with reference to the rights of minorities which I am afraid was susceptible of another, and what seemed to me in the connection in which he used it the natural and obvious interpretation. Speaking of the question between Roman Catholics and Jews, it might be, and the various Protestant denominations, he said—

> "All minorities must suffer. It is the badge of their tribe."

Well, Sir, some suffering may sometimes be inevitable in the carrying out of some measure of great public policy which the majority of the nation believes to be essential to its progress or its existence. That suffering ought as far as possible to be avoided, but for my part my belief is as I expressed it twenty years ago in a Protestant community, somewhat different from the tone and the sentiment of the right hon. Gentleman. I may venture to quote it because it represents the ground I took long before, which I have maintained ever since, and which I hold to-day—

> "Being strong we ought to be what the strong should always be, generous to the weak; measure full, heaped up and running over, is the measure to be given by the strong to the weak; and by so acting we will exemplify true Christian principles; we will exemplify true Liberal principles; we will do our best for the promotion of true Christianity, and for the spread of the Gospel."

Those are the general views with which I approach all questions of this description. This is an English Bill and we are concerned here mainly for Irish Catholics who have brought with them, from the country from which they sprang, sad traditions of those evil days to which I have referred, and who are naturally jealous to the last degree of their religious rights, and suspicious of any interference with them. I say that is a natural jealousy; it is a natural suspicion; it is a jealousy and a suspicion which you ought to respect, and as far as possible avert in the course of your legislation. They know what interference brought them in the past, and this feeling is in their blood and you must not quarrel with them; you must not be impatient with them; you must rather be anxious in the future to give them no excuse or pretence for imputing evil motives about what you do to-day. Do your part and do it in such a form that you may help to obliterate those sad memories, and create in them a confidence that you will respect their convictions. Those in the country of the Irish race, for whom we speak, are mainly of the poor and lowly. They are of the toilers whose share of this world's goods is small, and perhaps for that reason they look to joys that are to come. Now I will make no attempt to deal extensively with them, or to touch at all upon some of the topics which are to be debated on this Bill. I would say with regard to an observation made by the hon. Member who preceded me, that he seemed to have somewhat forgotten, in his declamation against parental rights to have some voice in the education of their children, that that education has been made compulsory by the State, and he seemed to have forgotten that after all a parent is a member of the State—that he contributes to the taxes of the State, that he contributes to the rates and that it is out of his taxes and his rates that the State is maintaining the system of education, whatever it may be, which is made compulsory upon that parent. He does not call for a subsidy, but claims that he shall be assisted to perform the duty which the State has made compulsory and which the State has undertaken to perform according to its own fashion. In the debate of 1902 my hon. friend the Member for East Mayo made a courageous and memorable speech. He then pointed out that as an inevitable consequence of that measure a share of the public control would be demanded and would be obtained as the result of the system of public and compulsory education propounded in the Bill. The hon. Member for East Mayo proposed an Amendment in that direction, but his voice was not listened to by those in whose interests the Bill of 1902 was passed; but, nevertheless, his voice spoke the truth, for we are now face to face with the position which has been rendered inevitable by concrete facts. A situation was created by the Bill of 1902 which has to be met and dealt with to-day, and, therefore, the hon. Member for East Mayo's view has so far been verified. It is, however, not so much that simple proposition, but the extent and the character and the methods of interference and the inadequacy of the safeguards in respect of which we believe the Bill is fundamentally vicious and will trench unwarrantably on the rights of the minority for whom we speak. I am going to confine my remarks to some of the aspects of Clause 4 and the alteration to a compulsory form which the right hon. Gentleman deprecated most emphatically while at the same time he averred that he did not believe it would make a difference in a single school, which meant that in every school area the clause would be put into operation. If it would be put into operation voluntarily what object is there in making that clear and plain which is going to happen everywhere? That is what Parliament shall be—the law. We are strongly of opinion that it is essential to the security of that minority, which in various parts of the country will have to fight these battles under the protection of this clause, that that protection should be made absolutely operative. We believe this to be no less important to the whole community. We believe that to leave the question whether that clause should come into force or not to the judgment of each council or local authority, which under this clause is to exercise judgment upon the question, would be to throw into the hands of the bigots and zealots, and those who delight in religious controversy, a firebrand ready to hand to be used for local purposes in local elections, and this would create difficulties of all descriptions. Nothing could be more injurious to the peace of those communities than to leave this as a wholly permissive clause. In my own country of Canada, after struggles of the most desperate character, involving the greatest extremity of bitterness between religious denominations, and disturbing the general peace and progress of the country and all political combinations, I rejoice that an agreement was made between those two provinces under which the overwhelming Catholic majority of one province agreed to respect the rights and dissensions of the majority by making equal laws for each. It was agreed that that should be made a fundamental element of the constitution. I agree that there are not the same elements of finality here as in Canada; but such elements of finality as you have you had better use, and the first of those elements is to determine the initial question, and to say that in cases in which you determine that there ought to be the right given in certain circumstances it shall be given. There is the suggested objection that there may be on some of the local committees cranks who will object, but whatever strength there is in that argument is infinitesimal compared with the evil of sending it as a firebrand to the country, and the bitter struggles which what you have proposed will create. Do what you think is right, and if you think this is not a right clause then reject it; but if you think it is right and just to the Roman Catholic minority that there should be such a provision, then use all your power to enact it. The view which the President of the Board of Education expressed in introducing this Bill rather added to than relieved my disquietude when the clause was read first, because he said—

> "I admit it is asking these minorities to trust in the generosity, the equitableness and the fair-mindedness of the local authority."

I daresay in many cases that will be justified, but I know not how far those other complications to which I have referred may arise. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Public opinion would resent any obstructive withholding of the permissive privilege."

What public opinion? The public opinion of the locality? If so, then the difficulty would not arise. Does he mean the public opinion of the country at large to be made operative by discussion in this House and another Act of Parliament? We know the difficulty of passing an Act of Parliament to protect a Catholic minority against a Protestant majority, and it would not be very readily operative. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "But they might truly say that it is left to their judgment even in the case of a four-fifths majority, whether or no; and therefore in canvassing, in election, in discussion, each rural area has this question in its own hands."

The right hon. Gentleman also pointed out that although he believed in justice and generosity, that the question was really in their own hands, and that it was for them in their own individual cases and with reference to their own community to judge and to decide. Those difficulties that I felt and which I now entertain have been assuaged in one sense by the right hon. Gentleman's speech to the Jewish deputation, in which he said—

> "Assuming the provisions of Clause 4, with reference to non-provided schools, to be illusory (and of course if they were illusory they would be a fraud) the Jewish body would benefit more largely than any other body; but it was pointed out that it was not a complete protection because it was not obligatory on the local authority to ascertain the facts."

So far the right hon. Gentleman is accurate. The right hon. Gentleman has imposed the duty upon the local authorities to make local inquiry for the purpose of ascertaining the facts, namely, the percentage of persons of one persuasion as compared with another.

> "If four-fifths of the parents of the children desire facilities it was an obligation upon the local authorities."

These are ambiguous words; I do not know what obligation the right hon. Gentleman means.

> "Of course, the local authority, if so minded might disregard the fair intention and the nature, and obstinately hold aloof from doing anything further."

Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman acknowledges that may happen. He has described his interpretation of the statute. If it is the fair intention of the statute that in any case in which the conditions prescribed by Clause 4 are found to exist the local authority shall agree, then what is the difficulty in saying that they shall agree?

> "He would take care that their view that a statutory obligation should be imposed upon the local authority to do its duty was put before his colleagues."

And he went on to point out that there was some difficulty in dealing with local authorities and that he did not know what the remedy would be, and so on. If the right hon. Gentlemen, with all the authority he has and all the authority with which he may ask Parliament to invest him—if this Imperial Parliament is unable to deal with the local authorities, how does he expect the poor Roman Catholics to deal with the Protestant majority in the locality affected? Then the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "It was hard to believe that any great local authority could be so bigoted as to disregard this statutory duty, he would not say obligation, imposed upon them for the education of the country."

Well, if it is a statutory duty, let us make it plain it is a statutory duty; that is all we ask. Make it clear that it is what the right hon. Gentleman describes it to be. If it is a statutory duty then they have to perform it. The right hon. Gentleman at present leaves it to their free decision whether they should perform it or not.

> "He was sanguine enough," he said, "to believe that no local authority would refuse to Jews, Roman Catholics or Churchmen the full advantages of the parliamentary grant which Parliament intended them to receive. At the same time there was considerable substance in this point, and he would give it careful consideration."

I am sure that consideration has been given to this point, and I hope that the communication which the right hon. Gentleman said he would make to his colleagues has been made, and we will be greatly relieved if we learn that the clause is to be made mandatory instead of permissive. The right hon. Gentleman then went on to deal with the question of the teachers. I am not at this moment dealing with that point. I am now dealing with the question whether Clause 4 should be mandatory or permissive, and I submit to the House that in the interest of the local authorities, in the interest of the Roman Catholic community, in the interest of the peace of the country, it is desirable not to throw this bone of contention into every place to which the clause may be applicable, but, if Parliament has decided that it is the duty of the local authorities on certain conditions to use the clause, to make that plain and clear by stating it in the enactment.

I now come to the percentage limit; the number in each school is not shown, and we have only general results of which we can produce the average. The only true thing to be said of the average is that it does not properly represent any one actual case. We cannot tell in how many of the schools there may be a question above or below four-fifths, and the same observation may be made of the population limit of 5,000. These are considerations that require careful study before they can be exhaustively discussed. I only mention this as a consideration which it is necessary to take into account before we can realise the real importance either of the percentage limit or the population limit suggested. To my mind, and I say it at once, the percentage limit appears to be too high. Again, as to the exclusion of rural areas, I see no reason for the exclusion. There exists a provision for the necessity of establishing a convenient possibility of interest in another school as an element for the application of the fourth clause and that convenience is bound to be ascertained by the local authority. If that convenience is not available in the rural area it will exclude the rural area just as it excludes the urban, but if it is available in the rural area then I see no reason why the rural area should be specially excluded from the operation of the clause. It seems an invidious exclusion as well as useless. It seems a restraint without any reason at all for it. I, at all events, see no reason for it. Then I hold that there is of necessity an element of considerable importance in the question of the census proportion. It is known that the working population of the country, and what includes perhaps more than their proportion of the population—the Irish population—is from the necessity of the case migratory. It is one of the hardships of their lot that they cannot conceive a home of their own. They may be divorced from their surroundings and obliged to find new homes, following the course of industry from time to time. We have therefore to deal with a migratory population, and that migration may result in the proportion's being slightly disturbed one way or another at short intervals. Do you propose to unsettle things by having every year or every few months a fresh census or a fresh inquiry, and if you find it is one below the four-fifths are you to disturb everything and upset everything, or do you propose that once established the right shall remain for a reasonable period? I think that the argument of convenience and practicability points to a considerable element of permanence in the settlement of the question once it is settled, and that disturbance should only be at reasonable and long interval. I come now to the other point on which the local authority is to decide, and that is the question of convenient attendance for those who may be excluded by the school's keeping the original character which it has and which it is intended to retain. Therefore, you get a concrete question. You have one question the effect of which I have already alluded to, namely, the existence of the proportion of the children belonging to the several schools. You come next to the question whether there is convenient attendance, and even if there exists that proportion, even if a school is so constituted as to be practically almost a homogenous school as in the case of a Roman Catholic, a Jewish, or a Church of England school—even so, the general minority, though here in the individual case the overwhelming majority of the local population, is to suffer unless it turns out that convenient school places can be obtained elsewhere at a convenient distance for the small minority. On that subject there is to my mind a difficulty in the Bill in that it does not provide for an appeal to the central authority from the judgment of the local authority on the question of convenience of access. It affords a more convenient loophole than the question of the application or non-application of the clause when the percentage of the school population has been ascertained. This question of convenience is one point on which it is very easy to differ, and I think that more careful and more unbiassed consideration—a consideration better calculated to do justice—would be ensured if the determination of the local authority on this question of convenience were not final but made subject to an appeal to the central authority.

Now, I come to the finally excluded schools. If my suggestions as to the reduction of the proportion of scholars and as to the reduction of the population of the area be adopted—vague and general as I have made them, for I am dealing with principles and not with details which are more appropriate for the Committee stage—if these suggestions are adopted the number of excluded schools might be much reduced; but whatever the number might be it is considerable at present, and I hold that in conformity with those principles to which I alluded in my opening remarks it is fitting that those finally excluded schools, if they prefer to retain what those who built them believed to be vital in their character as Roman Catholic schools, shall continue to retain that character. If they prefer that they shall not come under the Act and be acquired by the local authority, I hold that they have not forfeited their right at any rate as parents to their share of the rates, or their rights as parents even to what I would call a generous capitation grant. Therefore, I hold that they ought not to be left absolutely destitute as the Bill at present proposes to leave them.

I leave now all the questions connected with this branch of Clause 4 and I turn to what, after all, is more vital still—more vital than the question of "shall" for "may." I turn to the question of the appointment of teachers, because that is the root of the whole matter. What is wanted is that a school shall retain its existing character as a Church of England school, as a Jewish school, or as a Roman Catholic school. What must be acknowledged is that it cannot substantially and effectively retain that character unless the teachers are such as to give confidence to those who send their children to the school, and that being so, it must be acknowledged it is plain that there ought to be more security for the parents' right to have the teachers such as will keep the school of the character which it now is and which it is intended by the provisions of the Act to retain. I think the importance of this question cannot be exaggerated. I think that there ought to be a provision for a parents' committee with a negative or an affirmative voice in the choice of the teachers. Remember that you are hoping to make provision for what will last, if not in perpetuity, for a considerable time. It is a provision by which the local authority will perform merely the displeasing duty of displacing teachers from year to year, from month to month, or from week to week; and there will be, in numerous areas, cases in which there will be places to be filled up because of teachers becoming ill or dying or from other causes. Now, there ought to be some provision with reference to the choice of the teachers to fill these vacancies, and I have suggested such a provision. I am glad to know, quoting once again from the valuable speech of the Minister of Education to the Jewish deputation, that the right hon. Gentleman's view is that as regards the intention of the statute with regard to the Jewish teachers, the words in Clause 4 will require strengthening. He said—

> "With regard to the Jewish teachers the words of Clause 4 might require strengthening; but the intention was that the schools should be carried on just as they were now—that was to say not merely for a long time, but for so long as the arrangement lasted. He agreed that there was a loophole for any amount of pig-headed obstinacy, and denouncing bigotry, and jealousy, and unfairness, but it was certainly the intention of the clause that the teachers should remain the same as they were, those who were alone qualified to give the particular religious instruction which hitherto had been given in the school."

I only demand that these words should be made good. I only demand practical security with reference to the future that these words shall be made good. As to methods that is a matter for Committee; but I think it can only be by the parents having a voice in the choice of the teachers. There is a lack also, I think, in the provision for taking over new schools in the event of population increasing in districts. Besides the natural growth of places by industrial enterprise there are other changes and shiftings of population, and while some towns have fallen away others have grown, and in dealing any way worthily with this question you must consider the rise of a new population which would require the same rights and protection as is given to existing schools by this clause. I venture to suggest, therefore, that the clause is entirely defective in point of security, and leaves the Bill in a condition in which it is obviously not adequate, the object being, as I hope it is, by a reasonable measure to settle this question for a reasonable time, and so relieve this House from such discussions as the one we are now engaged in. I earnestly hope that the difficulties to which I have alluded and others which I have deliberately abstained from presenting to the House upon this occasion may be met at some further stage by the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues. For us these defects are at present insuperable. They are defects particularly as to the choice of teachers, which affect the rights and consciences of those for whom we speak; they are defects which it is impossible for us to overlook; they are defects, therefore, which render it impossible for me, at any rate at this stage, to vote for the Second Reading. But, I hope that, by continuing the discussion in the tone adopted by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division, in a temper moderate and firm, the day may come at some later stage of the Bill that we may enter a different verdict upon the Bill.

*MR. MACLEAN (Bath): I am bound to say that, judging from what we have heard, the speeches of hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House have been based on the assumption that no general election took place in January last, and that the question of education has never been brought before the electorate. I had a great deal to do with that election in the West of England, and I am sure that had it not been for the education question we should not have had such a large majority in that part of the country. One would imagine that we were approaching the day of the tyranny of minorities rather than that of the tyranny of majorities. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have evidently refused to accept the logic of a stricken field. What did the last election decide? It decided definitely and clearly that there must be popular control of public schools, and that there should be one class of school; that there should be no religious tests, and no denominational teaching at the public expense. After all, the Bill is contained in Clause 1, from which follow the three points which were, as I have said, decided at the last election. After all, what has been declared by some hon. Members to be impossible, is a thing which has happened. "The impossible has clothed itself in fact, and gone through the hollow mockery of being done." There is not the least doubt that Bible teaching in the schools has been a success for thirty-six years. One would think that it had been suggested for the first time that there should be simple Bible teaching. With regard to the opposition which comes from the Irish Nationalists, I have been deeply impressed with the eloquence and sincerity of the appeals made from time to time from the Irish benches to the Liberal benches—that the Liberal Party should trust them. In what way are they prepared to trust the democracy of this country with regard to the education question? I venture to say that the basis on the Ministerial side of the House is that of the citizen. We do not want unfair or unjust religious privileges for any sect or religious denomination. The position we take up is that of citizenship, and I appeal to our Nationalist friends opposite to join with us in granting to the democracy of England that trust which they have asked the democracy of England to grant to them. I venture to think that this Bill is conceived on broad lines and in a spirit of liberal compromise. I am quite prepared in the interests of peace to settle this question and to further any reasonable suggestion which may be made. Suppose, after all, these attempts at agreement fail as the Bill stands, there is a possibility of the matter being effectively and economically dealt with by the provision of schools of the State in place of schools belonging to denominations. By one clause a million of money is provided. By Clause 28 the time for repayment of the borrowed money is extended to sixty years and the money can be borrowed at 3¼ per cent. I have made a calculation and I find that within that period by using that million we can provide fully £25,000,000, which will be quite sufficient to supply adequate schools throughout the land which will be at the disposal of the people at all times. Such schools will be a magnificent national asset, and will be open to the people at all times, including Saturdays and Sundays. We on this side earnestly desire a settlement of this great question. We want to learn on which side of the question the most truth lies and to arrive at a proper and just solution. I give hon. Members on the other side credit for a similar feeling. I believe in the sense of the House on this question. But there is something greater than that. The spirit of the House has been handed down for hundreds of years; it broods and hovers over the House in the desire to find out what is best for the nation at large. When we descend from the heights of a Second Reading debate into the valley of hand grips in Committee we shall, I hope, proceed in a spirit of compromise. We have been sent here, not as delegates in the interests of any particular section, but to look after the good of the community as a whole.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I wish to address some remarks to the House as I happened to be for five years on the London School Board, and to have fought two School Board elections upon a question closely associated with this Bill. We were promised that by this Bill we might get into the calm sea of a final settlement, but if we have been before in the choppy waves of the Channel, the Bill promises to bring us into Atlantic rollers. I had some confidence, and I have some confidence still, in the fairness of the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Education, and I cannot bring myself to believe that he is mainly responsible for the more contentious clauses of this Bill: I think they are rather to be attributed to the President of the Board of Trade and some of his colleagues. At any rate, much as I deplore having to fight this Bill, we cannot let judgment go by default. There is one thing upon which I may congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Education, and that is that this Bill does at any rate attempt to make some provision for religious teaching. We have heard speeches in favour of purely secular education, but I look with greatest apprehension of any proposal of that kind, and I think many of us on both sides of the House would agree in opposing it. I cannot believe that writers who assert, as I saw stated in a socialistic organ the other day, that socialistic reforms are far more important than religion, have really gauged where their opinions will lead them to. It is much too serious a matter for a country to be without religious teaching or religion altogether to believe that this House would assent to it for a moment. Look at the state of things in France, where, I believe, even the fables of La Fontaine are forbidden wherever they mention the name of God. We do not know what will happen to future generations, let alone to the nation itself, if we allow the people to grow up without any adequate sense of national, moral, and religious responsibility, and without religious teaching. What are we offered by this Bill? The Bill will set up an undenominational religion which is to be made the standard religion of the country, and which is to be patented, as it were, by the Government. If you are going to force down the throats of many of His Majesty's subjects a religion of which they disapprove, it seems to me to be on a level largely with the intolerance of the Middle Ages. Consider the case of a poor man who believes in definite religious teaching. A rich man can afford to send his son to a school where that definite religious teaching is given, but the poor man has no other choice than to accept for his son teaching with which he is dissatisfied, or else under the conscience clause to withdraw his son altogether from religious teaching. This, I repeat, is an attempt to force down the throats of our fellow-subjects one form of religious teaching. Such a course was not approved by so great an authority as Mr. Gladstone, who, writing to Bishop Hamilton, said he was not friendly to the idea of constraining by law either the total or the partial suppression of conscientious differences in religion, with a view to fusion of different sects, whether in church or school, and that he believed that the free development of conviction was on the whole the system most in favour both of truth and of charity. That is a definite statement, and it seems entirely opposed to the principles of this Bill. What, after all, is this undenominational teaching? It is to vary with the whim of every local authority. ["No."] Yes, the local education authority has the power to impose a syllabus or not just as it pleases. We do not know whether this undenominational teaching includes the Apostles Creed, and this kind of undenominational teaching is to be given only at the mercy of the local education authority. Of course, you may have a good local education authority. The President of the Board of Education quoted the Hampshire County Council as a model under the present law. That is so; it does its utmost to carry out the existing law to the best effect.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): There are many others just as good as the Hampshire County Council, but I only quoted that one.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL: Quite so, but there are many county councils who do not go so far as the Hampshire County Council, and I have taken the trouble to obtain its regulations. I should like to know whether a large number of the local education authorities would make any regulation that the schools shall begin each morning with prayer, including the Lord's Prayer.

Subject to the Conscience Clause, religious teaching is compulsory in the schools. Is every local authority likely to agree to that? In the second place, there is a regulation which provides that no teacher shall be called upon to give religious instruction if he has a conscientious objection, and if there is no teacher available for that purpose a teacher shall be called in from outside to give religious instruction. I should like again to know whether all educational authorities will acquiesce in that? Will they allow outside teachers to be engaged to give religious instruction where a teacher in the school has a conscientious objection to giving it? Is a third regulation of the Hampshire County Council, requiring an annual inspection in religious instruction one to which all local educational authorities are likely to agree? I shall be glad to hear it is, but I venture to say there are many educational authorities that will not go so far as the Hampshire County Council. That being so, I am afraid we cannot guarantee that the denominational teaching which is to be given by this Bill will be a fixed quantity. It will be a variable quantity dependent upon the views of the educational authority. There are some local authorities which will not have any religious teaching at all. At the time I was fighting a very acute school board election in London in 1897——.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell): And got very badly treated.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL: I beg the hon. Member's pardon, I came out second on the poll.

DR. MACNAMARA: I was referring to your Party.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL: The interruption is quite irrelevant. At the time that election was going on official figures were quoted which showed that there were 320 school boards in Wales. Of those, sixty-two forbade religious teaching altogether, and 118 only allowed the Bible to be read without hint, note, or comment. That, I suppose, is to be the kind of arrangement to be permitted by this Bill. It may be that under this Bill the local education authority will refuse to make any terms with the managers of the non-provided schools and will refuse to give religious teaching in any school it builds itself. The position is very unfair. It is a position we must fight to the bitter end, and I regret to think that it is even contemplated in this Bill. I do not think hon. Gentlemen opposite fully realise how deeply we feel upon this subject. I am not speaking as what is called an extreme High Churchman. I am not that. But I do think that definite religious instruction is a fundamental portion of education, and it is not a thing you can sell or barter for maintenance of fabrics or for handsome rentals out of public funds. It is far more important. We claim that it is an alienable right which belongs to parents just as much as the right hon. Gentleman will admit free education is. Something has been said already, and I should like to say something more upon the fact that no teacher need show the slightest competence to teach religion. He need not even believe! What other country ever had such a notion as that? In secular education we are insistent that the teacher who teaches history, geography, or any other subject, shall qualify himself by the most stringent examination. In religious teaching, on the other hand, teachers need not necessarily believe. They are not to be asked if they believe. The other day I was told of a case where a boy asked his teacher with regard to some religious dogma in which he had been instructed, "Sir, is that true?" and he was told, "You may believe it if you like, but I don't." Such an answer as that was enough to shatter the religious convictions of every boy in the class. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Education said the other day that he had been struck by the secular atmosphere of the voluntary schools. Does he suppose that teaching such as this is likely to lessen the secular atmosphere in any degree? I like denominational teaching because it secures in many cases the continuity of the atmosphere of home and school life. Imagine a family where at home a child is imbued with the idea that he ought to go to church on Sunday and when he goes to school he finds the idea of going to a place of worship is altogether discredited! I do not say that is always the case, but it is sometimes the case. Does any hon. Gentleman think that such an answer as I just now mentioned, "You can believe it if you like, but I don't," is likely to encourage that idea?

With regard to the Bill itself I want to observe in the first place that it is rather remarkable that it does not touch the secular clauses of the Act of 1902. I am glad that it does not, because it shows the Government pay a great tribute to the secular clauses of that Act. I suspect that the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Education hardly realised when he distributed Liberal leaflets throughout the country at the time of the election how good an Act the Act of 1902 really was. With regard to the finances of the Bill, we are to pay £1,000,000 of money under Clause 12. Who is going to benefit by that? Who gets his value for his money? I cannot see that anybody is going to benefit except the Nonconformists. We do not want to spend all this money in this way. We would much prefer to leave the law as it is. We would welcome what we believe to be the remedy for the one grievance of the Nonconformists—I have said so before in this House—to provide for them whatever religious teaching they desire in all the schools in the country. But if that is to be done, let us spend the £1,000,000 in doing it. Why spend it, not in educational efficiency in any sense, but merely to give value for their money to some of the Party opposite, and a large proportion of the ratepayers and the taxpayers—I would say the large majority, are people who object to this undenominational teaching. Some speakers have criticised our attack on the clause interfering with the trust deeds. In this country trust deeds are generally considered binding. Hon. Members were surprised at the use of such terms as "filching away" and "confiscation," but I do not think they can appreciate our standpoint. We have been encouraged by the State to maintain these schools. Let hon. Gentlemen opposite put themselves in the position of a donor to a hospital—or take myself. I give a handsome donation to a particular hospital, and continue to do so for a number of years to encourage the management of that hospital. I have no right whatever at the end of, say, twenty years arbitrarily to transfer that management into entirely different hands. I gave those subscriptions to encourage the management of the hospital in the manner in which it had been carried on, and when people have given donations to voluntary schools they have done so on the same conditions. It is not suggested that when Parliamentary grants were given to voluntary schools they were not given to encourage the management of the schools in the old way, and no one would have supposed that the State in supporting those schools was going to say that the education must be given in a different way. But now the right hon. Gentleman comes forward to set aside all provisions and trust deeds if the local education authority see fit, and to give the schools over to purposes which they were expressly founded to avoid.

Then upon the question of facilities. There are to be no facilities in Council schools. Why not? Is there any reason for setting up two sets of schools? In one set you are not to have any facilities under any circumstances. In the other, the existing denominational schools, you may have these facilities under certain circumstances. I believe facilities are practicable everywhere. The hope has been expressed by the hon. Member for South Longford and other hon. Members that the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to make Clause 4 mandatory. That is the only way to deal with it. If Clause 4 is to be dropped, as I think one or two hon. Members have suggested, I can only promise them that that will ensure that this Bill will not be a final settlement at all, but a most complete declaration of war on the part of the Government against denominational teaching. If it is the desire of the Government to make some endeavour to effect a final settlement, I would urge them not to listen to any such suggestion as dropping Clause 4. I do not think that the figure four-fifths has any special virtue, and I would refer the right hon. Gentleman to Clause 27 of the ill-fated Government Bill of 1896 in which he will find that the words are not "four-fifths" but a "reasonable number." I hope the right hon. Gentleman will accept the substitution of " a reasonable number " for " four-fifths." I object still more emphatically to the clause which provides that this denominational teaching shall not be given in school hours. That is one of the provisions of the Bill to which I have the most resolute and strenuous objection. What is to happen if you put this teaching out of school hours ? Would it ever be likely to be looked upon as a matter of great consequence at all ? My experience when a child was that directly a subject was taught as an extra it was disliked. If you are to put religious teaching on that basis you pave the way most effectually to secularism out and out. Again, I used to hear on the London School Board, when this system of facilities was urged, that one of the greatest objections to it was that possibly you would have outside teachers, and that consequently discipline would suffer. It was then suggested that religious instruction under any system of extended facilities ought to be given by the teachers with whom the children are familiar so as to maintain discipline. Here we are going to run riot and encourage—if that contention be true —want of discipline ; and besides, where is the freedom of the teachers, so strongly advocated as a rule by their National Union ? Many teachers consider that definite religious teaching is essential. Why are you taking away their freedom by enforcing undenominational teaching ? I should have thought that if the National Union of Teachers carried out its views logically, and urged, as it generally does on most other matters that there should be absolute freedom for the teaching profession, it would have opposed any proposals such as this Bill contains to restrict the freedom of the teachers in such important particulars. I will not refer in my criticism to the Commission which the right hon. Gentleman has proposed, more than to say that it seems to me that some of its features recall the Star Chamber, and that I cannot help thinking it must be an excrescence on his original draft.

I do not think I ought to sit down without mentioning what I consider the best system as a remedy. The Minister for Education knows perfectly well that the Industrial Schools Act of 1866, Clause 20, provides for definite religious instruction in all industrial schools, and the parents or guardians of the children may insist on getting that definite religious instruction in which they believe. Is not that a method which the right hon. Gentleman might have followed ? We have heard nothing up to now about the Industrial Schools Act. I suppose it is thought wise to keep it in the dark, but it has worked extremely well, and I cannot imagine why the Government should not have made some effort to introduce that system for all day schools. I plead that the right hon. Gentleman will still consider whether he cannot introduce a similar system into all the elementary schools of the country. It does not seem to me to offer any very great difficulty. In Germany and Austria religious teaching is carried on in that way and is given at the expense of the State, and there is no difficulty about it. In Western Australia there is a similar system of delegating teachers to enter the State schools, and it is so simply arranged that many denominations—Wesleyans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists—combine in submitting the same lists of delegates to the State authority so that the system should be worked more easily. Why cannot that be done in this country ? It is of paramount importance that parents of all religious denominations should be allowed to obtain for their children that definite religious teaching in which they believe, for it is the want of definite religious teaching which is the most serious outlook in the future. Some of us know the East End of London well. I have been there from time to time, and what I have noticed is that the great mass of people there belong to no Church and believe in no creed. I think it is absolutely essential that from their youth, boys and girls should be brought up to believe in something definite, otherwise they are apt to drift as they grow older into crime, irreligion, and a dulled sense of right, which whispers that morality is either useless or futile. We want to stop all that. There is a fine passage in one of Ruskin's works which says that crime can only truly be hindered by taking away the will to commit sin, and not by mere punishment of its commission. It can be stayed by education, but not education of the intellect only, which is wasted on some men and for others is mischievous, but by education of the heart; and it is the education of the heart which we denominationalists want. Oh, that we could avoid making this so controversial a question! Cannot we try to join in accepting each other's convictions, as Mr. Gladstone advised, allowing each denomination to give its own teaching, and by that means showing greater toleration to each other, trying to work more together for that closer unity of all Christian churches which I believe at bottom we all desire, and so ensuring that the future of this country will see a generation growing up which has regard to religion and morality, and for the national greatness and welfare which all that noble foundation involves?

MR. ADKINS (Lancashire, Middleton) · I hope in the few words which I shall venture to address to the House to have that indulgence already given to many who, like myself have, in this session. addressed the House for the first time. I do not propose to follow the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, in a detailed criticism; but I hope that if I cannot advance this question, at least I may do nothing to embitter it. The hon. Member for Aston Manor asked what benefit the £1,000,000 voted under this Bill for the hiring of existing schools, or the building of new ones, would be. He said that it would be no benefit to Churchmen who are contented with things as they are, and suggested it was merely an endowment for Nonconformity. I would like respectfully to suggest that this Bill cannot properly be judged if it is judged merely from the point of view of Churchmen, or of Nonconformists. That £1,000,000 properly spent by local authorities will be for the benefit of citizens and for the benefit of education, and I would point out why this Bill may commend itself to Members in all parts of the House on grounds not so closely connected with the religious controversy. I venture to speak as one who has been trying for some years to administer various Education Acts which the wisdom of Parliament has seen fit to pass, and I say, without hesitation, that so long as you have the dual system, and so long as you have tests for teachers, the educational system of this country cannot be as efficient and as thorough as it should be. In the county of Northampton, where you have to deal with a large area and a scattered population, it is no exaggeration to say that half the time of the Education Committee and of its sub-Committees has been occupied with matters arising directly from the dual system, and from the want of subordinate authorities—time which might otherwise have been spent on the direct educational work which is waiting to be done. Therefore, on the mere ground of administration I think it highly desirable to get rid of the dual system. I agree with an hon. Member who spoke earlier that the first clause of the Bill is the Bill in a very true sense. By getting rid of the dual system we are taking a step which must be taken before we can advance towards the other educational requirements. There must be many Members who know how much time is taken up in apportioning the cost of coal or of gas, or of settling the endless conundrum as to how many different authorities the so-called voluntary schools belong to in the course of twenty-four hours, and I should think all will agree in wishing to remedy that state of things. I understand the Leader of the Opposition to say that the school buildings remain the property of the denomination, but if the cost of all repairs and of all duties connected with the schools are placed on the local authorities there will be a unification of administration which I hope the right hon. Gentlemen will approve. In doing this is there involved any violation of those rights of conscience which are as dear to us as to those on the Opposition side?

Under the Bill in many of the schools religious instruction will be given as it was before—at any rate in the provided schools. I believe that in the non-provided schools nine-tenths of them will remain as they are to-day. In the diocese of Peterborough I find that specific denominational instruction is given on only one day in the week, and only for half the year. I ask the House to consider whether a system which combines administrative unity with the power of giving nine-tenths of that religious teaching, and the time in which the other one-tenth can be given by those who believe profoundly in it—whether it is fair to describe a Bill calculated to bring that about as a measure which will violate the rights of conscience. I agree with the principle laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover that the State should be neutral in these disputes. I recollect the way in which the hon. Member for North Camberwell pointed out how neutrality was set at naught in the Act of 1902. The doctrine of neutrality is a very novel one to come from the Opposition, because it is unknown in English legislature up to the present time. The hon. Member for Marylebone knows the political policy of the Church of England from the days of the Act of Uniformity to the days of the Act of the right hon. Gentleman. The very principle on which the State acted was that national education should be handed over to the Church and be her special privilege and preserve. We all recollect what occurred in the reign of George IV., when episcopal interest prevented the beginning of national education apart from episcopal control. Some of us have read in the administration of Sir Robert Peel, how Sir James Graham brought in provisions in connection with the Factory Acts which would have still more closely riveted education as the privilege of one religious body, and on that ground they had to be dropped. While I would be the last person to impute to the Opposition the predispositions of their political ancestors, I say that this sound doctrine of political neutrality is one contrary to the traditions which they embody, and one the very novelty of which is an additional reason why so many of us are anxious to support this Bill.

With regard to the provisions of the Bill, I will not intrude any remarks upon Clause 4, but if I understand the Bill aright it is an attempt to give greater public control and to put more and more of the interest of education upon citizens of all creeds rather than upon citizens grouped in hostile creeds. If that is so, I say the success of the Bill, alike in passing through the House, and in being carried out in the country, will depend upon the thoroughness with which that sound civic principle is carried out in all its clauses. I hope the Government do not hold the doctrine of verbal inspiration in respect to some of the clauses of the Bill. Under Clause 3 the local authority has put upon it a very difficult and complicated duty with regard to the taking over of schools. The local authority as at present constituted is the town or county council, but it has to act through a committee largely composed of persons who are not representative or who represent the very interests involved in the proposed action of the local authority. I hope the Government will see their way to say that in all these transactions and bargains between the local authority and private owners those members of the education committee who are not elected by the people shall on these issues have no vote; because if you leave the local authority affected by the decisions of the committee, some of whom are interested in the other side of the bargain, you are cogging the dice against public control, and you are unintentionally placing them in the position of that fortunate defendant who had his principal witnesses upon the jury.

With regard to Clause 26, for which I thank the Government, I hope it may be looked upon merely as a skeleton to be clothed in the conduct of this Bill through Committee and to be made more general. I hope that not only the Government but the House will approve of authorising every county council to prepare some scheme of general devolution which, while retaining its own supreme authority, will bring home at once to small localities their duties, rights, and privileges in regard to educational administration. I most cordially support the Second Reading of the Bill, and I look forward to the discussions in Committee to improve it in many particulars. As so much has been said, and properly said, with regard to the religious question and undenominational teaching, I would like to say, in conclusion, that I do not agree with the contention that we have heard from the Opposition that denominational teaching and undenominational teaching can be fairly compared in the sense that if you allow one you must allow the other. Denominational teaching involves an advantage to a part of the community whilst undenominational teaching does not advance the sectional cause or advantage of any part of the community. While we all admit at once the logical rigour and the extreme unattractiveness of the secular solution of this question, I hope the Government will adhere to the principle of the Bill and make one more experiment to see whether Englishmen generally cannot unite in the inculcation of simply Christianity which they can supplement and modify in their other relations, and by passing this Bill at once assist good educational administration and remove existing obstacles from educational progress, and so forward the cause of education in this country that neither the conscientious sacerdotal pretentions on one side nor secular theorists on the other may for many a long day break down the fabric which may be created by my right hon. friend's scheme and by his persuasiveness in this House.

*MR. BUTCHER (Cambridge University): After listening to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, with its language of passionate violence and militant sectarianism, I have no longer any difficulty in seeing why it is that there has hitherto been no solution arrived at in England of those denominational differences which have been adjusted in other parts of the civilised world. In Germany and Canada, as in Scotland and Ireland the denominations have been able to compose their differences, but in England up to the present this has not been the case. As a person much more concerned about education than with theological controversy, in which I am wholly unpractised, I will do my best in what I have to say to avoid any bitterness of speech. The main feature of this Bill is the abolition of the dual system; what is henceforth aimed at is a uniform type of school and a uniform system of religious education, which is called undenominationalism. What is undenominaalism? The debates of yesterday and to-day are sufficient to show that it is an exceedingly difficult thing even for the most honest inquirer to find out what it means. If undenominationalism means the teaching of the foundation truths of Christianity, I, for one, cannot join in some of the harsh things that have been said about it. I frankly admit that it often has meant a simple but thorough instruction in those central truths; and an appeal has been made to the experience of the last thirty-five years. It was made yesterday in several impressive speeches, and it has been made also to-day; Bishops and Archbishops of the Church of England have been quoted to show how excellent in many cases has been the religious education given by the London School Board and other school boards. I do not question that at all. No doubt undenominational teaching may be of such a kind; but must it be so? and, above all, must it be so under the greatly changed conditions which the Bill would introduce? Have we—I will not say any guarantee, but any reasonable assurance that it will be so? If the experience of the last thirty years has proved anything, it is that undenominationalism is something fluid, shifting, intangible, sometimes differing very little from the teaching of the Church of England, sometimes shading off into pure secularism. I will cite two witnesses, both representative men. The late Bishop Creighton said that undenominationalism so far from being a simple religion had turned out to be highly complex—

> "Its complexity would baffle the mind of the most experienced theologian."

Dr. Joseph Parker declared—

> "It needs a body of police to watch it and a college of divines to define it."

Hitherto we have had two chief safeguards; first the fact that alongside of the undenominational schools the Church schools have existed; they have created a friendly rivalry; and have set up a standard. Secondly, a very considerable proportion of the teachers even in the board schools have been trained in the training colleges of the Church of England. Now, the voluntary schools are to be swept away, and already there is an outcry on the other side of the House and from that Party outside the House that the denominational training colleges, the last remaining safeguard, should go also. Indeed I do not feel sure whether under the Bill as it stands denominational training colleges may not be abolished. We shall be glad to hear of that later from the Minister of Education. Then there is a third point marking a great difference between the prospects of the near future and the experience of the last thirty years. Under the Bill the status of religion in the schools will be altered. Religion is no longer to be a subject which is necessarily taught by the teacher; it is placed outside school hours; it is, in fact, reduced to a secondary and subordinate place; and surely that fact must affect seriously the character of the teaching. Let me mention another point. In the course of the last thirty years everyone is aware that there has been a very marked growth of secularist opinion; and the paramount question for us now is, what form of religious education will best stem the tide of advancing materialism and agnosticism? Can you wonder that the bare residuum of Christian truth which is to be taught in the schools in future seems to us insufficient for that purpose—that highly attenuated form of religion which is accepted, but avowedly only for the moment, as common ground by the two sections of the Nonconformist party, the secularist and the undenominational Nonconformists? The truth is that you cannot here argue from the past to the future with any degree of confidence. The conditions are absolutely changed. Nor can one blind oneself to the fact that there has been a growing divergence between the ideals of the Church and of Dissent, and that this divergence is now the more sharply marked when secularists and undenominationalists have agreed to combine their forces.

But it has been said that much as we may dislike undenominational education, it is the only thing we can get from public funds—that State money cannot go to,—denominational teaching. Well, is it not a poor and ignoble conception of citizenship to say, "I refuse to contribute to any definite form of religious instruction which does not exactly harmonise with that which I desire for myself." Why should not each person pay his share by rates or taxes or both—I see nothing inviolable in the rates—to build up the religious life of others? This seems to me to be a debt which one fellow-citizen owes to another, a reciprocal duty arising out of the sense of a large organic life. The other and opposing idea I believe to be a survival of the old and obsolete notion that the State is a mere policeman, the protector of life and property, concerned only with the material welfare of the community. We have all of us outgrown that idea, and we recognise that the State is concerned with the whole organic life of society, with all the higher activities and energies of its members. I believe there is hardly a man in this House who could not say with Burke: "The State is a partnership in all science, in all art, in every virtue, and in all perfection." And if so, is not all that goes to the discipline and training of character, including, pre-eminently, the moulding and penetrating force of early religious training—is not all this within the province of the State? We are told that the State is undenominational. But this only means that the State is neutral or impartial towards all denominations, and it can show its neutrality in one or two ways, either by ignoring all denominations or by supporting all. The objection made this afternoon by the President of the Board of Trade to the second alternative was this, that it is impossible for the State to concern itself with so many rival sects. That might be a practical difficulty if it were not that in this country there is a natural grouping of denominations which reduces them to a limited and manageable compass, and makes the endowment or recognition of all denominations no impossible task. Let me not be told that this is a doctrinaire idea: not a bit of it. We have attempted to carry it out, though not with entire success, in England; we have carried it out successfully and consistently both in Ireland and Scotland. When I hear hon. Members on the other side of the House speaking as if it were a first principle or axiom of politics that we cannot give State money for denominational teaching, I ask, do they know what is going on across the Channel in Ireland and what is going on in Scotland? In Ireland education is entirely denominational, and every penny is paid out of taxes. Even the sacred doctrine of public control does not exist there in the most elementary form. In Scotland the board schools are denominational; the education is for the most part based on the Westminster Confession of Faith, and these schools are supported both out of rates and taxes. Both in Ireland and Scotland, moreover, there is no religious minority so small that the State does not recognise its voluntary schools and aid them with public money. Why, in the name of religious equality and of common sense, are these principles to be set aside for England?

Most persons, however, will admit that the State has some religious function. If so, on what basis can it be exercised? On no equitable basis except the right of the parent; the right not merely to withdraw a child and keep its mind a blank, not merely the right to say "He shall not learn that," but the right to say "He shall learn this other thing." It has been asked how parental rights can be respected in the case of a single Presbyterian child. I admit that you cannot in every instance carry out the principle absolutely. None the less the principle remains the right thing to aim at; and what I complain of in the Bill is that what ought to be the rare exception is made the guiding principle of the Bill, and what ought to be the principle becomes the rare exception. I think it was the late Bishop of London who said that hitherto it had seemed as if the parent existed only that he might be prosecuted when his child did not go to school. Something similar might be said of the speech delivered yesterday by the hon. Member for Leicester. Parents, he declared, had no rights. The parent, according to him existed, it would seem, in order that the child might appeal against him to the State, which was its true guardian. Both in the Bill and in the debate in the House far too much contempt has been thrown on parental rights. Some say, parents are indifferent, they do not care whether religious teaching is of one kind or another. Well, find out whether they care; put it to the vote in each locality; give them an opportunity of expressing their opinions; but already throughout the country parents are showing whether they care or not. Then, when they do express their opinions do not say, as has been too often said in the last few weeks, "It is all an organised hypocrisy." The only clause in which there is an approach to any full recognition of parental rights is Clause 4. But it is the recognition of urban parents only, and of comparatively few of these. The rights of conscience become an affair of localities and of large fractions. I will not attempt to expose the inequalities in Clause 4—it has been done already—or the entirely irrational nature of that novel fraction which is to find a place for the first time in the Statute Book. It is distasteful even in the eyes of its own supporters; but to many of them it has one supreme merit, that it will in the main debar the Anglican Church parent from the exercise of his rights. Now if the Church of England had given a teaching so rigidly, so exclusively denominational that it could not have been accepted by the children of other communions; if she had not attempted to discharge her duty to the Church of the nation, and shown herself large-minded towards all who desired to share her instruction, then she would have come within the privileges of the "four-fifths" clause. As it is, she is to be penalised for her comprehensiveness, and that in the name of religious freedom!

The parents' rights, then, are one of the two cardinal questions on which the Bill turns. It is a question which closely touches the principles of civil as well as of religious liberty. The other cardinal question is the fitness of the teacher, and this goes to the very heart of the educational problem. What is the teacher? What does he know and what does he believe? That is even more important than, What is the syllabus? The competence of the teacher to give religious instruction depends on three things—first, his knowledge, secondly, his training, and thirdly, his convictions. Now, as to knowledge and training, neither of these are required under the Bill, for religious teaching is entirely outside the sphere of his duty; it will not appear in the Code; and there is to be no test of his capacity under that head. Some eminent Nonconformists have even expressed the view that the Bible is so simple a book that it needs no training to teach it. The simplest, indeed, but also the most difficult of books, especially to teach to a child! That wonderful and composite volume of prose and poetry, of history, biography, oratory, letters, drama, lyric, idylls—unique in its diversity as well as in its unity! Such it is viewed on its purely literary side. But then the teacher has not only to teach the facts of Bible history and literature; he has also to teach the truths of religion, and here again we ask, Who is the teacher? What are his convictions? We are told his beliefs must not be "tested." It is assumed that for denominational teaching, tests are necessary, for undenominational teaching no such test is necessary. And yet we are told in the same breath that the teacher is to teach the fundamental truths of Christianity; in other words, he must teach dogma. Dogma then must be taught, but no questions may be asked to ensure that the teacher believes what he teaches. As for "testing" in the proper sense they do not now exist; we may put them aside. Now I would ask any Member of this House if he has ever attempted to teach a subject in which—in whose truth, in whose value—he had no belief. I have seen it done in secular learning, and there the result has been disastrous failure. In religion it would be a failure not merely disastrous but impious. And a child is very quick to detect the ring of insincerity. Every one is agreed that this early lesson in insincerity must at all costs be avoided. How can the danger be escaped? There are two possible ways. The local authority may make private inquiries; what kind of man is the teacher? where was he trained? is he a man of religious life? Thus they find out the Church he belongs to. Might they not as well ask him the question directly? Is the test by indirect inquiry less offensive than that by direct question?

The other method is provided by the clause which gives the teacher the statutory right to decline giving religious teaching. Assuming that the teacher takes advantage of that right, just consider how far-reaching will be the effect. In any given school it will lie absolutely with the teachers to decide whether any religious education shall be given; because there is no provision in the Bill for appointing others in their place, if they decline. I will put a case which I am quite sure is not fanciful or impossible. The National Union of Teachers may resolve that indirect inquiries into religious opinions are against the spirit of the legislature after "the abolition of tests." They may feel, too, that religious teaching is a difficult acquirement, and that they are not trained to give it. Above all, they may hold that an inquiry into the fitness of teachers establishes an invidious difference between teachers. And so they may well come to the conclusion that they should, as a body—I will not say strike—but decline to teach religion at all. If they do so, then the ultimate decision as to the teaching of religion in the country, though nominally at the discretion of the local education authorities, resides in effect, not with them but with the teachers. Is it for this that Parliament is asked to shirk the decision whether religion is to be taught? I say that all these considerations when put together seem to carry us perilously far towards secularism. Let us sum up the case. If we put aside the privileged position offered chiefly to Roman Catholics and Jews, what will be the form of religion that will prevail through the length and breadth of England? It will be that local variety of the Christian religion which is drawn up under local option, embodied in the syllabus of a local authority, taught by teachers whose religious knowledge, and therefore whose professional fitness, is untested; whose religious or irreligious belief seem to be placed above all inquiry; teachers who are not bound to teach instructing children who are not bound to learn; this instruction supplemented in certain instances by a more distinctive religious teaching given not as of right according to the wishes of the parent, but on sufferance at the discretion of the local authority; outside of school hours and of school discipline, by teachers who for the most part will be amateurs; an instruction in which the trained and qualified members of the school staff are forbidden to take part, and even this grudging and precarious supplement to a colourless creed is by statute to be disallowed in all the existing county schools of the land.

In 1870 Mr. Forster in a memorandum to his colleagues said—

> "We are, and mean to remain, a Christian people."

The same words would, I believe, express the mind of the Minister of Education. But can this shifting and nebulous religion, without law or standard, be an effectual barrier against the inroad of secularism? Look at the United States. They began with an undenominational system, with simple Bible reading, without comment, the Lord's Prayer, and a hymn. The question was raised whether the reading of the Bible without comment was sectarian teaching. It was taken to the High Court of Winsconsin in 1890, and it was decided that it was sectarian, and could not, therefore, be given out of public money under the State constitution. That judgment, as far as I can make out, has affected other States. The reading of the Bible is being dropped in most of the States. [MINISTERIAL Cries of "No, no."] Well, allow me to read you a passage from an article by President Murray Butler of Columbia University. He is speaking not of the moral and religious loss which has been sustained in America—and I do not wish to measure that; indeed it is difficult to measure the loss which you sustain by not reading the Bible or the gain you obtain by reading it—he is referring to the effects on literary training arising from the disuse of Bible reading—

> "To the average student the first Book of Paradise Lost is an enigma. The epithets, the allusions, even many of the proper names are unfamiliar. This is due to ignorance of the Bible."

To the English-speaking race, moreover, the loss of the Bible in the schools means far more than it would mean to any other civilised people. The Bible is wrought into the very texture of their thought and speech; it colours all their literature; above all, it is the chief source from which they draw their spiritual life. I merely wish to point out the far-reaching consequences of such a change, and my point is that our common religion and our common culture are bound up closely together. Secularism appears to me to be the goal and not the remote goal of this Bill. What is happening in America, would happen with us; and it is to be observed that any people that has gone the way of secularism has never been able to retrace its steps. If we desire, as I believe we all desire, to save religious education in England, we must make provision for it in a larger and more tolerant spirit than that of this Bill. It must rest on another and more national basis than the Dissidence of Dissent. We must not blindly ignore the actual facts of religious life in England. We must give up all attempts to coerce consciences. Children must be brought up in the faith of their parents; parents must be allowed to exercise their rights, whether they live in town or country; teachers must be sought who by knowledge and conviction are competent to teach the subjects they profess; and religion itself must not be treated as an unimportant extra in a school course, for if it is made an accident of the school it will also surely become an accident of life.

MR. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): In addressing a few words to the House, on the very important Bill which is now under discussion, I should like to say one word with regard to the speech to which we have just listened with so much pleasure. I am bound to say that, speaking for myself, I do not think that hon. Members on this side of the House want to be lectured by hon. Members on the other side as to the value of the Bible. It seems to me that if anybody wants to be lectured upon the importance of the Bible, and upon the importance of its not being made the subject of political controversy, it is the late Prime Minister, who by his Act of 1902, threw the Bible into the cauldron of public controversy and dispute. I would like to say in reference to letters which have appeared in *The Times* from various bishops and members of the lesser clergy, that they have rated the Liberal Party rather soundly, because they have said that they have a mandate in regard to the question of education as produced in the Bill. With regard to that mandate, I will only say that I think every single hon. Member on this side for a long period dealt with that question. For myself, during a long candidature of three years, the one great and overwhelming subject of discussion was the education question. It was that question which, during the first years of the campaign against the late Government, aroused the interest of the electorate as it had not been aroused before for ten or twenty years. If you went into the village, you found the population there were determined to get rid of what they regarded to be the grossest tyranny. This determination was altogether independent of the Act of 1902, and before it was passed there was a strong feeling among the intelligent and independent electorate in the villages that there ought not to be one school only belonging to one sect which gave the religious instruction of that sect to the exclusion of all others. Hon. Members repr ach us as to what they describe as the setting aside of trust deeds, but may I say that it was their own proposal to allow all the children to go into the schools in violation of these trust deeds. Then hon. Members talk of confiscation, but may I remind the House that the Church of England lives and moves and has its being in confiscated churches. Which are its churches? They are confiscated churches. Which are its trusts? They are the trusts of another Church which was reformed. Therefore, when the Church of England talks about confiscation and breach of trusts it is putting itself in a lamentably weak position. In regard to the management of the village schools as carried out under the Act of 1902, I think all parties are agreed that the dual control must be got rid of, but I think it well that some argument should be produced in this House to show those who doubt the necessity of abolishing it why it should be abolished. There is the well-known example of Mildenhall where, in a body which contains the parson's brother-in-law and his sister, the appointment of the clergyman to the post of local correspondent was moved by himself, seconded by his sister, voted for by the latter and his brother-in-law and carried by the casting vote of the chairman who was the parson himself. Such things as this are constantly going on under the Act of 1902, and we are told that they show the glorious neutrality of the Act. The hon. Member for Cambridge University said we ought not to coerce consciences, and suggested that the Bill now under discussion coerced them, but I would ask what about the consciences which have been coerced for generations past and the unfair treatment that has been meted out under the Conscience Clause to hundreds and thousands of people during the last few years? We are told, as the parson said to the people, "You can always use the Conscience Clause and your children can never be proselytised." Yes, but how is this worked? There happens to be a mining village where the Nonconformists resolved to withdraw their children from the school during the time devoted to religious instruction. I expected loud cheers from the parson and an acknowledgment that the Nonconformists were going to work the Act of 1902 fairly. A few months after the withdrawal of the children the school treat came on in that locality, and then the managers of the church school announced that that treat would not be available to any children except those who attended religious instruction. This is the way that the Church treats little children whose parents withdraw them from school under the Conscience Clause. These are things which must be got rid of, and they will be got rid of by the abolition of the dual control. That the Liberal Party have a mandate in regard to the teachers has I think been shown by the elections all over the country and the approval of the teachers, as expressed at their annual meeting, of the course which is to be pursued. With regard to teachers who are denominational, who will be called upon to withdraw denominational teaching from the children, we regret that that is necessary, because we know that they enjoy giving it, but it must be done in the interests of all the teachers who are not denominational teachers, and in the interests of those who will come after them. Permission to teach will mean persuasion, and that persuasion will be all the more powerful because it will create a kind of persuasion which will lead to compulsion, and that compulsion will be illegal. But the compulsion will be there, and we know, especially those of us who represent country districts, that all over England there are education committees which have a large number of clergy and Churchmen upon them, and those committees would be able to find out what a person's religion was if the permisson were given. We say that that should not be allowed, and we also say that there should be some return to the *ad hoc* system which we regret was abolished.

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (SUPERANNUATION FUND) BILL [LORDS.] (BY ORDER.)

Read a second time, and committed.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Postponed Proceeding on Amendment to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time," resumed.

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. RENDALL, continuing his speech, said: Then it is urged by many speakers on the other side that Bible teaching is not sufficient for a large majority of the people of this country, but the evidence of the last thirty years has been that it is quite sufficient. The hon. Member for Cambridge University quoted Ruskin, and he spoke of Ruskin's strong testimony to the education of the heart; but education of the heart is best given by a teacher whose character we are sure of. Far more likely is it to be given by him than by such a one of whom we can say we know something of his doctrine. If we look at the education of the children of this country, I am assured that we shall be more sure of its value if we know full well that the characters of the teachers are perfect rather than if we know they profess one doctrine or another. The principle of all-round facilities has been very cleverly argued and many speeches have been made in order to demand some concession, but I would recall to the House the words used by Sir Joshua Fitch. In dealing with this matter some little time ago Sir Joshua Fitch said—

> "It would mean: (1) An inquiry into the religious beliefs and preferences of the parents—a most difficult task in itself, one never attempted before, and sure to arouse widespread and just resentment; (2) a corresponding separation of the scholars into classes to receive the specific denominational instruction required; (3) an inquiry into the theological opinions of the staff of teachers, in order to determine their fitness to give denominational instruction; or (4) the employment of clerical or other experts from outside to supersede the ordinary staff, and thus to impair the legitimate authority of the head teacher; and (5) the inevitable introduction into schools of religious and sectarian differences, happily unrecognisable by the children at present, but certain to become mischievously apparent in the corporate life of the school; the more so, because the meaning and reason of the new departure will not only be unintelligible to the majority of the scholars, but are sure to be misunderstood."

For this reason it seems to me that the proposal to allow facilities in all schools is a most unsuitable proposal and would lead to a great deal of quarrelling.

I come lastly to this point whether the Members of this House are bound by their pledges to support the Government proposal as to the four-fifths clause and the facilities to be given in each school on two days a week. I think there is no moral or legal claim for either of those demands. I think in regard to the building of the schools enough money has come from the taxes and enough from persons willing to give in order to avoid paying taxes. These persons gave that money for no other purpose than to avoid paying the heavy rate that would have come upon them if they had not paid voluntarily. I do not like compromises in any form, but in this world we are obliged to compromise very often, and for the sake of peace, I think we ought to support the Government in regard to these two clauses. I think the proposal of the hon. Member for North Camberwell in regard to making this four-fifths clause mandatory is one requiring our careful consideration. What might be done as a matter of grace would not be so likely to be done as if the authorities were forced to do it. But upon that part of the Bill I should like to see the Bill passed as it is. On this occasion I regret that hon. Members representing Ireland are not able to act with us, but they have to safeguard the interests of their national religion, and they are doing so. What I want to urge is that while there may be a difficulty between the Protestants and the Catholics and in like manner between the Protestants and the Jews, still there is no such difficulty between the various Protestants of this country, and general undenominational teaching could be allowed in all the schools of the country. That is the general opinion of the laymen of this country, and though there are persons who hold high ecclesiastical views who are making a great fuss about the proposals in this Bill, I am inclined to think that that is due to the fact that it is a question of property; that if there was no property concerned in this matter they would make a great deal less fuss. I think a very small section of the laymen of England take that line, and that the advertisement which has been given to the section of the public holding these views is an advertisement given to a section which represents a very small portion of the opinion of the country. I believe Churchmen as a rule are inclined to think that undenominational teaching is good enough for them. For my own part, I can only say if this Bill is to be interfered with by the bishops the Bible is good enough for me, and I am prepared to fight an election or a bye-election on that point.

*Sir FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): I hope the House will allow me to say a few words upon this Bill from the point of view of one who has given a great deal of time to the administration of education. I do not propose to occupy much time, but I may be permitted to express my sincere regret that the hon. Member for the Thornby division has presented what may be called another bundle of stories without either a description of the place or the date or any indication whatever to enable us to verify the statements.

Mr. RENDALL: I gave the place in three instances. I do not know the dates, one was Mildenhall, Suffolk,—another was in Glamorganshire, and another was Pucklechurch.

*Sir FRANCIS POWELL: But even supposing the incidents reported were accurate, they do not cover the whole ground. There are exceptions to every rule, and weak members of every society and nothing can be more unfair than to bring forward stories of this kind even supposing they were absolutely true. They are rare exceptions to a general rule, and they by no means prove the real position of the case. I do not propose to discuss the clauses of the first part of the Bill, which has been fully entered into by previous speakers. I may, however, be permitted to make one remark. It appears to me, after a careful examination of the clauses on more than one occasion, that there are no real facilities; that there is no certainty with regard to facilities. The facilities proposed in the Bill are difficult to obtain, and it is almost impossible to render them permanent. I assent to the statement made by the hon. Member for North Camberwell last night that Clause 4 requires alteration, and that what is now permissive should be made compulsory. That remark also applies to many cases in the first portion of the Bill. There is no doubt that many Church of England schools have been transferred owing to want of courage on the part of those who were the owners or trustees. In many cases, with more time given to consideration, such action would have been cancelled. Still the fact remains that we have lost many schools owing to the weakness of those who betrayed their trusts, and I have no doubt whatever that if this clause of the Bill becomes law the same unhappy result will arise on future occasions. What I desire to see is permanence of trusts. Many of these schools have been built, as has been already stated, at a very great sacrifice of money, amounting in many cases to many thousands of pounds. And the construction of these schools has cost that which to many is more dear than pecuniary sacrifice; at the cost of great anxiety, suffering, and labour, extending over many years. As you go through the country you find in many cases that the school buildings adjoin the church, and the passer-by will see at once that the school is part of the parochial organisation, and it certainly seems to me to be almost an insult to those who have erected these schools to say that these schools, being a portion of the parochial organisation, shall be eliminated by such a Bill as this, and devoted to a purpose different from that on behalf of which they were erected. So much for the first clauses of the Bill.

Now I desire to make one observation which I am, I think, in one sense bound to make from my having taken an active part in educational deliberations. I must associate myself to-day, as I did during the debates which took place upon the Bill of 1902, with those who do not regard with any alarm the operation of the Cowper-Temple clause. I believe that most valuable instruction in Biblical, and therefore Christian knowledge, is given under the Cowper-Temple clause. I desire to go one step further, and to express my great regret that observations should have been made concerning the Cowper-Temple clause which has rendered even possible any misconstruction as to its aims and intentions. I am quite sure there has been no disposition to cast any slight upon Biblical teaching. My regret is that any word should have been spoken, even in a most incautious moment, which would disparage that form of instruction.

I desire chiefly on this occasion to pass from this part of the Bill to the second, which deals with endowments. I hope that the attention, not only of the Government, but also of the country, will be closely directed to those clauses. I myself have been intimately connected with some of our grammar schools. I have been a life governor of the Bradford Grammar School ever since the year 1870, and therefore I have a long and varied experience of the working of those trusts. The language used by my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Duchy yesterday gave me the impression that he did not altogether appreciate the working of Part II. of the Bill. One of the most important considerations is the date at which any scheme under the Bill will operate. It does not affect the old endowments alone, it affects new institutions. It affects institutions of a few years standing—such a school, for example, as that well-known and highly honoured school the Leys School in Cambridge, unless I be in error of a very limited character as to the date of that institution. My impression is that that school is brought under the compulsory operation of this Bill. Another institution of recent date which I feel almost certain will come under the operation of the Act is the Holloway School for Girls at Egham. I cannot myself believe that the Government really fully understand the position, and I hope the House will permit me to call attention to the real operation of these clauses. This is not a Party matter; it is not a political matter; it is not a denominational matter. Under the existing law, schemes for the most part cannot be altered except on the initiative of the governing body. These clauses propose that the initiative should be placed in the hands of the Education Board. I believe that to be a most dangerous movement in the direction of centralisation. I feel myself quite convinced that there is an inconsistency between the giving of these new powers and the great affection for local independence and local action of which we hear so much just commendation. I believe that those in the country who administer these institutions are more competent than the central authority can be to know what are the wants and, in legal language, the needs of the district, and I think it is a very great misfortune that so much power should be given to the central authority under this Bill. There is a great difference between action by the consent of the central authority and action by the initiative of the central authority. The power which initiates is eminently more powerful than that which simply gives consent, and I do hope that those who are entrusted with the great and responsible office of administering educational charities will carefully study the operation of these clauses and see that no injury is done to the institutions in which they take so laudable and patriotic an interest.

The next point to which I desire to call attention is the date of the operation of these schemes. Under the present law a scheme can only affect a charity of fifty years standing—fifty years from the Act of 1869. But under the Bill as it now stands a scheme operates thirty years back, the period not running from the date of this Bill, if it becomes an Act, but from the date of the scheme. That is to say, whereas under the Act of 1869 you have a fixed date, under the operation of this Bill you have a date constantly varying from year to year as time passes.

The effect of that would be to constantly bring in new institutions. I have had too much experience of legislation on these subjects not to know that many changes take place in the course of centuries, and in the evolution of public opinion, and that changes must be made in the administration of trusts accordingly. But this remark does not apply to more recent endowments. A policy which was wise thirty years ago is not foolish now, and there are many conditions which have been proved by experience to be salutary, but which if handled in a rough manner by those not fully conversant with the working of the system may prove most mischievous and injurious to the trusts. Another remark I would wish to make is as to the somewhat crude language used in the operative clause. If any hon. Member will examine the statute of 1868 and other statutes, he will find what care is taken in the language of clause after clause. I will mention one or two of the provisions wherein I think greater care ought to have been taken. There is the teaching of religion. Under the Act of 1869 and the subsequent Acts there is careful provision, not wholly satisfactory, I admit, with regard to what I may describe as religious securities; there is the security for safe-guarding religious teaching, there is the provision for the Conscience Clause, and provision of many kinds affecting students, teachers, and the rights of the parents. They are drawn with precision, accuracy, and care; but they are swept into this Bill by one comprehensive clause framed in the most drastic language and in the most sweeping form of words. There are in the old statute, provisions as to certain conditions of life and certain classes. Those were carefully investigated by a Committee of this House, of which I had the honour of being a Member, and the Committee were unanimous that those provisions required rather greater rigidity than greater elasticity. But under this clause they are all swept together and the clause has to be put into operation by the action of the central authority, without that careful investigation which was required by the Act of 1869.

There is one further subject to which I think some reference ought to be made, and that is the permanence of the new endowments. I feel anxious that these trusts should continue. Benevolent founders should be encouraged to continue their foundations, and they ought not to be alarmed in any way by the action of the legislature. Then there is the question of procedure. It may be that the procedure might be simplified. I do not say that it is not capable of improvement, but there is a revolutionary change in the procedure made by this Bill. Certain forms have to be complied with in framing a new scheme—certain publications made, and certain inquiries instituted. At the present time the charity has power to carry out the whole scheme after inquiry and without loss of time. Under the new Act, where there is opposition, the scheme cannot become law without reference to Parliament. It will have to be brought here by Provisional Order, and in case of opposition it will have to be referred to a Select Committee, and the whole case will have to be investigated. If there is opposition it must be before a Committee according to Parliamentary usage and at the cost of the charity. This means that if the governors or trustees think that the central authority has acted wrongly they cannot protect their property without expending funds which in many cases they can ill afford to do. Personally, I have for a good many years now been taking a great interest in educational work in the north of England. In my opinion this is a question which ought to be considered carefully by all those who have at heart the interests of the educational foundations of the country. I rejoice at having had this opportunity of submitting my views to the House, and I thank hon. Members for the kind consideration with which they have listened to a somewhat technical explanation. I now desire to express my disapproval of the Bill as it now stands. How far it can be altered to meet the objections which have been raised will depend upon the temper with which the Government accept our suggestions. I hope that temper will be reasonable, and that this great opportunity of improving our educational system will not be lost.

It would be wrong of me if I did not express great alarm, and I must confess that my fears are greater than my hopes. I earnestly desire that this attempt at legislation may not be unsuccessful, and I hope that the effect of these proposals, as they pass through Parliament, may be of such a character as to improve the educational system of the country. I trust that the result will be real progress in education, and that this measure will produce peace, calmness, and goodwill in a region of our social life where they are so essential to success.

*MR. SPICER (Hackney, Central): I am sure that we all have a great respect for the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigan, and if the spirit and temper he has displayed in dealing with this question is indicative of what we may expect on the other side of the House generally, then I think there are great hopes for the future of this Bill. I was especially glad to hear the hon. Baronet's testimony to the Bible teaching given under the Cowper-Temple Clause. It is the first time I have heard from the Opposition such emphatic testimony to the value of that teaching. It comes as a remarkable contrast to the general tenour of the remarks made by the hon. Member for Cambridge University, who seems to hold such pessimistic views, and who has such a poor appreciation of those who for over thirty years have been carrying on this Bible teaching in our various schools. It is to me rather strange that the hon. Member should raise doubts on this question, seeing that so large a percentage of the teachers in our board schools have been trained in Church of England training colleges. I desire to look at this question perhaps from a different point of view from some hon. Members. I had not the honour of a seat in the 1900 Parliament, and therefore I was able to take a more active part in connection with outside work. I sometimes feel that one of the disadvantages of Members of this House is that whilst they are earnestly engaged in the discussion of some great measure they are apt to get a little out of touch with the prevailing feeling of the country. I will give one illustration. I think the feeling outside this House during the discussion of the 1902 Education Bill with regard to the abolition of our great school boards was much more intense than perhaps it was in this House. Probably comparatively few Members of this House have had the opportunity of serving upon school boards, because it is not often that one can occupy both positions. Although I am perfectly well aware of some of the weaknesses of our school board system, I believe that a great injury was done to the educational work of the country by the abolition at one blow of all our school boards, and the dismissal at one stroke of men of character and power who for the first time had come forward to serve the public in connection with these Boards. There is no doubt that what led to a reversal of the position of parties in this House was the strong feeling of the injustice of putting the voluntary schools on the rates. Not only this, but when these voluntary schools were put on the rates all Free Churchmen were debarred in those schools from taking the position of headmaster and headmistress. That was one of the main factors which led to a complete reversal of the political complexion of this House. With the Education Act of 1902 commenced the slump of the Tory Party. It commenced with the Education Act and was completed by the proposals made with regard to the fiscal question. At any rate, we on the Ministerial side of the House have come back with a distinct mandate upon this subject. In many of the speeches to which I have listened in this debate this mandate seems to have been completely forgotten. I believe that only the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University has thrown any doubt upon that mandate. We all know that a very distinct mandate has been given to us in reference to popular control of all State supported schools and the abolition of all religious tests, and we dare not support any Bill which does not provide for the carrying out of those two principles. Hon. members on the Opposition side seem to think that they are now in the same position as they were in the 1900 Parliament, but may I remind them that the Church of England to-day in connection with this education question is not in the same position as it was a few years ago. Looking through the list of Members of this House, I have sometimes wondered whether the number of Free Churchmen in this House is not larger than the number of actual members of the Church of England. If that is so, then it surely alters the whole position, and it means that really hon. Members opposite have no right to assume the position of former years. At the present moment in this country Free Churchmen are doing a good half of the religious work of the nation without any help from the State. I think the leaders of the Church of England have spoken too hurriedly and too positively in regard to a great measure of this kind, and that they are running great risk of making the general community feel that they are anti-national with regard to the system of education, that they are anti-popular with regard to the management of that system, that they are anti-biblical, and that they are anxious to put the Creeds of the Church before the teaching of the Bible. What has led to this state of things? I say it is the deliberate action of the Church of England and of the Unionist party since 1870. Up to that time the elementary education of the country was mostly in the hands of the Church of England, and I give them full credit for the sacrifices they made up to that time. It was also helped by other Churches who were receiving grants from the State, but there was a huge deficiency in the supply of education. Mr. Forster brought in his Bill; that Bill recognised the work that was being done, and where there was a deficiency it gave power to the ratepayers to form school boards and supply that deficiency. The Church of England has never as a whole loyally accepted the new conditions. If they had only accepted the new conditions we should not be in the position we are in to-day. I hold that the Church then lost a great opportunity for good of the best kind. I speak as a Free Churchman. There are few parts of the country where I do not know intimately the position of the section of the Free Church to which I belong. I know our own difficulties and disadvantages. We are trying to get rid of these disadvantages from year to year, and we are succeeding. I was a little surprised that the hon. Member for the University of Cambridge should quote some fossil of Nonconformity who expressed the opinion that the Bible was easy to teach. It was not worthy of one occupying the hon. Member's position. We have at any rate tried to set an example in educating our ministry, and, speaking as a Congregationalist, I say that we are sending out from Mansfield College on the average better educated men in our ministry than the Church of England at the present time. After the passing of the Act of 1870 the Church of England, if they had loyally accepted the position, might have led the education movement of the country, because they have such enormous advantages, social, educational, and financial; but instead of that they as a rule either opposed or did what they could to minimise it. The principle of the Act of 1870 was that they were to receive grants equal to the amount they raised in fees or subscriptions. It was practically sixpence to sixpence, but they were not content with that, and subsequent Governments, with the support of a Party majority, gave them not sixpence to sixpence, but something like tenpence to twopence. Having asked more State help, the Church was not entitled to so much power in the management. But although they received tenpence for every twopence, they were still allowed the whole management of the schools. In 1902 the Church passed over their schools entirely, apart from the actual buildings, to the support of the State. Now that the schools are being supported entirely by the State they have no right to ask that they should also have the control of the education. The cry of confiscation which has been raised under the present Bill has fallen on deaf ears, because it is not in accordance with facts. It must be recollected that the Church of England is dependent on the State for the support of their schools, and the present Bill proposes to pay an adequate rent for the use of the buildings. That is not confiscation. Much has been said about parents' rights. Parents have the rights of citizens and no more. They have not the right to ask that, at the State's expense, they should have the special religious teaching they require. In his speech the hon. Member for Aston Manor gave an illustration which showed that it was practically impossible to have such a system. Undenominational teaching is not a Nonconformist proposal. It was not started by the Nonconformists. The mover of it in the London School Board was, I believe, Mr. W. H. Smith, and he was supported by Nonconformists and Agnostics. The State, I maintain, can only give in religious teaching that which is common to all. We have tested the so-called school board teaching. We have had thirty-five years of it, and it has proved satisfactory. I hold that the religious teaching of the children is the responsibility of the churches and the parents. Of course I know that the logical consequence in connection with this is secular education—that the State should look after the secular and that the churches and the parents should look after the religious education. Let me say that in my recent contest I took up this position. I said that personally I wanted to see the Bible continued in the schools, but I admitted that strong denominationalists might say, "You may be content with that, but we are not." I said if they took up that position I was bound to take only one position, and say, "Very well, if you denominationalists claim that you will not have simple Bible teaching, upon you must rest the responsibility of the State taking the secular and the churches taking the religious teaching." [AN HON. MEMBER: Why?] As a Christian man I do not dread that time. I was sorry to hear the hon. Member for North Camberwell say last night that if that was done he feared that it would mean that a number of children, especially in the slums, would go uncared for. Surely in this Parliament we are not going to legislate for the continuance of slums. I believe that the great danger under which we are living at the present time is that so many who ought to be taking part in the religious education of the children, not only in the churches and schools, but in the homes, are relying upon the work's being done by the official in the schools. You are asking why there is religious indifference. One reason is that so many who are taking an active part in looking after the religious education of children in the House of Commons, and elsewhere, are not taking an active part in the religious teaching of either the children at home or the children who surround them, but are leaving the work to the official teacher. I speak of this feelingly. I do not wish to make personal references, but I have tried for the last forty years to take my share of this work, and I say that, having done that, I do not look with fear even to the time when the State shall recognise the secular and the churches and homes shall recognise the Christian teaching. After all, this Bible teaching, at which some hon. Members sneer, is in harmony with the principles under which we are living day by day. There are the public schools. I do not claim that they are national, but any man who knows them must acknowledge that the teaching of the Bible in these schools is carried on in an undenominational spirit. In everyday life we try to recognise the good in every part. I was extremely sorry to hear the speech of the hon. Member for South Longford, because it showed that the chasm between Protestant and Roman Catholic is even deeper than some of us had thought. I confess that as I listened to that speech, although I recognised, as all hon. Members must have recognised, the spirit that is behind it, I asked myself whether it would not be better that the Roman Catholics of this country, where in sufficient numbers, should have separate treatment outside this Bill altogether. After all, the great majority of the people in this country are Protestants, and we ought to try and frame a policy of education suitable to all Protestants to whichever section they may belong. I feel keenly on this subject, and I support this Bill because I believe it is an honest attempt to deal with this question in a national and broad spirit.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton): I am very glad that my hon. friend who has just sat down did justice to the earlier attempts and to the sacrifices made by the Church of England to care for the education of the children before the State took any interest or part in the matter, thereby earning the gratitude of the whole of the people of the country. I am one of the very few Members in the House who took a part in the passing of the Education Act in 1870, and I think that the hon. Member did scant justice to what the Church of England has done since that time. During the thirty years that elapsed between the passing of that Act and 1902, the Church of England set herself to work, and I am not going outside the mark when I say that she built 6,000 schools and spent several millions of money. The Church did not oppose the school boards, but she felt that they did not give the full teaching which she believed to be necessary, and therefore she set herself to do the best in her power to fill the gap, and to enlarge her system. So far from the Act of 1902 being a gain to the Church, it has thrown a very great additional expense on her on account of the additional demands made by the local authorities. I think I am within the mark in saying that the Church has spent more than a million in the last three years in supplying these deficiences. I do not think it is fair to call this an Education Bill or a Bill to make better provision for education. It will destroy a good deal of the best sort of education that the schools have been giving, and it will disturb education rather than make better provision for the children. It might be called a Church of England Disability Bill. It was introduced for the payment of election debts. There was a great deal done for the Government in the last election by the Nonconformists, and it is reasonable that they should expect their reward. I am not disposed to dispute the fact that as evinced in the elections there was a mandate from the country to the Government to deal with the question, and the Government had very little choice but to introduce the Bill as the first measure of importance in their programme. Had the Bill been fair and reasonable it would not have aroused strong opposition, but it goes so far beyond that and the necessities of the case that we feel bound to raise the most energetic protest against it, and to record our emphatic objection to its arbitrary provisions. There is a cynical disregard of the feelings of Churchmen especially, and also of our Roman Catholic brethren. I am not accustomed to the use of adjectives, which are very often unnecessary and hurtful; but I do not think I am going beyond what is fair and right when I say that I think that the Bill is extravagant, unjust, arbitrary, and calamitous. It is extravagant because, at a time when national finances are subjected to a great strain and when the Government have come in with great professions of economy, it adds one million a year to the public charge without any educational benefit, and uses that million to deprive Churchmen of rights and privileges which they value above money, and for which they have made great efforts and sacrifices. They were encouraged to make these by promises of various Governments that the school board system was introduced to supplement and not to supplant the then existing system. The Bill is unnecessary, because it will interfere with hundreds of schools which are working without a hitch, and without a complaint from the parents; in a given time they have done a great deal to improve the education of the country, and they are doing their work harmoniously and well. Now, everything will be turned topsy-turvy, and many of the best teachers, who value their position for the sake of the religious teaching they can give, will be lost to the service. It is calamitous, because it does deliberate dishonour to religious education and makes it for the first time an extra subject dependent on the option of the local authorities. The extended facilities are of little use. It is tyrannical, because it forbids many teachers giving religious instruction, which instruction is so important in the formation of character and also of morals. Then there is the question of the interference with trusts. The doctrine of trusts is that they are sacred and should not be subject to the caprice of any one. In dealing with the trusts there is power to ignore the wishes of their founders, and they are placed at the mercy of irresponsible, irremovable Commissioners, armed with most drastic powers, even the power of putting into force when they want to take possession of a school the Small Tenements Act. I hope and believe that this provision as to the Commissioners will entirely disappear from the Bill. I have said all this because I thought it was only right and fair to place before hon. Gentlemen opposite the grounds for what seems to them an unreasonable opposition.

I am sure that hon. Members are not desirous of doing any injustice even to Churchmen, and that they have been greatly misled by the agitators who have spoken of the Bill of 1902 as imposing further disabilities upon Nonconformists, whereas on the contrary it introduced public management into the schools. [Laughter.] It is easy to laugh, but nobody can deny that these schools were under the Act placed under the county councils instead of being left to one man, one parson power as in the past. It is therefore absurd to say that no public management was introduced. But the control given was not sufficient for hon. Members opposite; they wanted the whole control, and hence the agitation, which has been fomented very largely by the kind of statement made yesterday by the hon. Member for the Louth Division of Lincolnshire, when he said that the bitterness of the agitation was caused by the fact that the Church of England was rapidly approaching in doctrine, creed, and ritual the Roman Catholic Church. I have had some opportunity of ascertaining how far that statement is true. I can, speaking with authority, give it an emphatic denial. I do not deny that there have been in some quarters something which might give colour to such a statement, but to speak of the Church of England as a whole, of a large majority in it, as approaching the doctrine, creed, and ritual of the Roman Catholic Church is grossly erroneous. We wish that our Nonconformist friends would do justice to us as we would desire to do justice to them, and not, in the course of removing the liability to pay a small amount of rates, to inflict a greater injustice upon us, and one which in the words of the hon. Member for Leicester would give ground for a more aggravated form of "passive resistance" by Churchmen than anything of that nature which has occurred before. I am prepared to admit that the necessary outcome of the Church's acceptance of rate aid and of the result of the last election are the points raised as to the abolition of tests and complete public control. We did accept those points in principle in 1902. We asked our friends to go a long way in doing so, and got very little credit for it. But we were able to induce them to accept those points because we took security for that which we valued so much, the continuance of religion. Now the Government threaten us that they will do away with that security, but I ask what are they going to put in its place? How are you going to ensure that our sacrifices and efforts have not been in vain? We want to consider fairly and fully what is possible under the circumstances, and we ask at all events that the question of denominational freedom under public control should be considered. Is that impossible? Such a system exists in various forms in Scotland, in Germany and, I believe, in Ireland. Is it impossible in England? I believe it might be so worked as to be thoroughly democratic, ideal, and yet preserve the teaching which we value. It is only in some such way as this that we can avoid that secular education which the hon. Member for North Camberwell said last night was abhorrent to the general feeling of the country. We might be driven to counsels of despair if we are not able to come to some agreement by which it can be avoided. The responsibility will be very heavy upon those on the other side of the House who, by obstinate refusal of concession, bring about that result. I am ready to accept Biblical teaching, in the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury, as laying the foundation upon which the ampler teaching of Christian faith can be secured, but it ought to be compulsory and in school hours, facilities being granted on one or two days a week for denominational teaching to all schools, provided and non-provided schools alike. I would associate myself very closely also with what fell from the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigan in regard to Part II. of this Bill. The Bill was thought to apply only to elementary schools, but, as a matter of fact, Part II. applies to all endowments except those of the Universities, and of seven public schools. The provisions are very far-reaching. The Commissioners are entitled to make provision in regard to any trust of over thirty years standing and to disregard the wishes of the founders. This part of the Bill goes very much beyond the proposals of the Endowed

Schools Commission, which only recommended interference where the charity was wholly or partially useless, mischievous, or obsolete. In thanking the House for listening to me, I will merely say that my desire has been simply to ask others to look at this matter as fairly as they would ask us to look at it if they were in opposition, and to express the earnest hope and belief that it may be possible by Amendment so to alter the Bill that our objections may be removed. I admit that there will be great difficulty, but I hope that this cruel sense of injustice under which we shall suffer if the Bill passes in its present form may be removed, otherwise we may refuse to consider it and seek to bring about its rejection by every means in our power. I am sure that none of us wish the prolongation of this controversy year after year. We want a settlement of it, and it is because the Bill in its present form does not offer that that I shall most unhesitatingly vote against it.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. LOUGH, Islington, W.): Those of us who, like myself, have been accustomed to listen to the right hon. Gentleman have always heard from him something which appealed to our commonsense rather than to our passions, and he will find on this side of the House a disposition to reciprocate the good wishes he expressed, that we may be able to arrive by conciliation at an adjustment of the very grave questions which are raised by this Bill. I do not intend to trouble the House at any length with the contentious points which have been raised in the debate. I will only say after an experience in three Parliaments, that my right hon. friend who introduced the Bill ought to be well satisfied with the progress it has made. I have never seen a large and contentious measure better received than this Bill has been. It has been met with approval by a large and solid majority in this House, and I am perfectly satisfied with its reception in the country. The clergy it is true have raised great objections to the Bill. I am not one to speak lightly of the clergy, but they are not all politicians, and many of them do not know the best means of realising the objects they have at heart. Putting aside the opposition of the clergy, the Government may feel that the Bill has been well received. Certain objections have been made, with which I have deep sympathy, by the Gentlemen who represent Ireland. I can only say that there has been a great disposition to meet many of the criticisms they and other minorities have levelled at the Bill. It may not be easy to bring the provisions they have criticised up to the standard they desire, but I appeal to them to have regard to the equilibrium of the Bill. It is exceedingly difficult to deal with this matter of education in a way acceptable to everybody. Many of the Amendments which are asked for would not tend to produce the result which hon. Members anticipate. The hon. Member for Louth asks us to strike Clause 4 out of the Bill altogether, but then the hon. Member for North Camberwell asks us to make the clause mandatory, and I ask many who desire to support the Government to consider the difficult position in which we are placed in trying to steer an even keel through all these difficulties, and I ask them to look at the Bill in as sympathetic a manner as possible. The Bill was not prepared in the interests of any church; it is a simple educational measure for the improvement of educational facilities for the children of the poor. It has been introduced in a spirit of moderation and conciliation, which will continue to guide to the end of our deliberations those who are responsible for it. I have been considering what is the best way in which I can assist the House in discussing this matter, and I have come to the conclusion that I can do so by answering the appeal addressed to the Government, by the hon. Member for Aston Manor, and by saying something in reference to the finances of the Bill. After all, have the whole of these difficulties arisen out of the question of how we are to finance the Church schools. The Church has complained of the intolerable strain, but this was not a strain upon any man's conscience; it was only a strain upon the cash of the Church. Now the Church has got rid of that intolerable strain and thrown it on to the back of the nation. So far as I know, the country has never had an opportunity—in this House certainly we had no opportunity in the closured debates of 1902—of considering what this strain was. We are the representatives of the nation, and it becomes us to ask what is the strain to-day and what it is likely to become to-morrow. There was a movement in regard to this matter, to resist the payment of the rate, which swept like a storm over many parts of the country. I know that superior persons looked upon that passive resistance movement, and said that the demand was small and that resistance was unreasonable, but you can never measure the force of resistance of this kind by the mere size of the demand which is made. It is true that the demand was small. The demand for ship money was small, yet the resistance to it led to a revolution. And since the days of ship money I do not know that there has been such a feeling of indignation in this country as that which swept through it at the time of the late general election. Much of that indignation arose from the financial proposals in the Education Act of the late Government. It may be said that it is a mean thing for us to raise this question of finance in connection with such a sacred subject as education, but the more sacred the subject the more desirable it is that its financial basis should rest on something generally and willingly accepted by the people. Now, if the House will allow me, I will throw myself on its indulgence for a moment while I discuss this large question. Let us first consider what change the Education Act of 1902 made in the educational finance of the country. When my right hon. friend introduced this Bill, he said we were here to amend these Acts. Let us then consider their effect from the point of view of finance as well as everything else. Those who will carry their minds back to the year 1902 will remember that the step which the Government of the day then took was to ask the nation to accept the financial burden of 14,000 voluntary schools scattered over every part of the country, to allow that burden to be borne upon the rates, to leave the control of those schools in the hands of the private individuals and bodies of trustees who controlled them previously, to allow them to open other schools and to throw the financial burden of those schools also upon the back of the nation. That was the appeal that was made, but no estimate of the cost was given; yet when you take the cost of the 23,000 elementary schools of this country you find it costs on an average £1,000 a year to maintain each school. This was the burden lightly thrown upon the nation practically without any opportunity to discuss it. The nation was not asked to shoulder the whole burden. It was supposed that a contribution was made by the Church contributing the building. The position was made rather worse by that, because of the pecuniary conflict which immediately arose. If the whole thing had been taken over there would have been no strife as to money, and the managers of those schools would have been what we hope to make them by this Bill, the servants of the public authority. That was the arrangement made in 1902, an arrangement which in its nature was a bad one. What was the principle on which it rested? The principle was that education, our greatest national service, should be financed by a mixture of philanthropy and State aid. I object to philanthropy in such a connection. It does not lead to economy. The philanthropist too often exacts a larger share of the patronage and control than his contribution warrants. There has been a long and interesting financial connection between these schools and the State. Many of them received building grants. I do not wish to make light of those sacrifices to which the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down and others referred through which these schools were built. What, however, is the history of the schools? In early days many received a small grant from the State. Then for many years they received a larger annual grant. Then in 1891 another grant was given to them of 10s., and in 1897 a further additional grant of 5s. So that in 1902, when the late Government dealt with this matter, they were in receipt of 35s. per scholar in respect of every school in the country. If the trustees of these schools were so anxious to retain them, why did not they remain satisfied with the 35s. per head which they were receiving, instead of driving this very hard bargain? The fact is, whenever one demand was satisfied another arose, until at last in 1902 came the demand that the whole expenditure should be taken over by the State whatever it might be. Let us see what contribution the late Government gave when they saddled the nation with that mighty burden. Practically the whole financial aid in the Bill of 1902 was given under Section 10. It is called an aid grant. That grant took the place of the 5s. grant, and of the necessitous school grants that had been made previously. These together amounted to about £1,000,000 and the aid grant to £2,250,000, so that the total Exchequer fresh coutribution was £1,250,000. Let hon. Members remember the huge new expense to be incurred and contrast that with what it is proposed to do under this Bill. The most important feature of this arrangement was the abolition of the principle of dealing with necessitous schools in a special way. Within two years of the passing of the Act, the hon. Members for East and West Ham were thundering against the late Prime Minister for relief. They got nothing from the right hon. Gentleman except interesting speeches, and no step was taken to deal with the matter before the present Government came in. What the House has particularly to bear in mind with regard to this Act of 1902 is the capricious changes that it made in the laws of educational finance. The precise provisions of the Aid Grant are of the most extraordinary character. Those who know them are amused by them. Those who do not know them must be amazed when they hear them. The provisions were first 4s. per scholar and then 1½d. for every 2d. in which the produce of a penny rate falls under 10s. Why any one of these provisions was invented no man living could ever find out. All are involved in the deepest mystery. The effect has been to give a practically level grant of 2s. 6d. per scholar with one or two unjust exceptions, and this has proved very disappointing so far as necessitous schools are concerned, as well as from other standpoints. Another extraordinary provision of the Act was Clause 18 (c) which stated that three-fourths, or at least a half, of the cost of providing any school should be thrown on the country parishes which the school served. I cannot think how any Government that knew anything about a country parish in England could propose such a provision. Its object can only have been to prevent the building of schools by the local education authority. I have gathered a few examples of how this provision works in the county of Buckinghamshire, where there are many parishes in which a penny rate only provides £5 and several parishes in which it provides less than £12. The result is that there are parishes languishing under rates of 1s., 1s. 6d., and 2s. in the pound in excess of the county rate. That was not the only difficulty into which the country parishes were plunged. I happen to be a little familiar with the depopulated district of Romney, in Kent, where there was for the single school a 3d. voluntary rate. Then this Act came along and the rate was raised to 10d. with no change whatever in the school. It is no wonder that the country should revolt at such provisions. The case in the towns is no better. Only last week the rate for the parish of Westminster was of such an extraordinary character that the city councillors issued an elaborate explanation—a sort of apology—for the rate. They gave the figures for the last seven years, which showed that the rates for education had increased by 70 per cent. during that period, so that the City of Westminster is paying £193,000 a year more, which is equal to a rate of 8d. in the pound.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The Act had only been in operation three years.

*MR. LOUGH: The late Government were extravagant for a much longer period than the hon. Baronet thinks. There is one other provision in the Act of 1902 to which I must make reference—Section 13, which dealt with endowments. When we consider the drastic way in which endowments were dealt with in the Act it is perfectly astonishing to listen to the criticisms that are levelled at this Bill. What did that clause do? It endeavoured to wrench away educational endowments, which were available for the purposes of elementary education, from the purposes to which the founders had devoted them, and to apply them to the reduction of the education rate. There were two objections to that. It was contrary to the old and sound doctrine with regard to the use that ought to be made of these endowments, and secondly, if they had succeeded, the endowments would have gone to reduce the rate in a different area from that which was intended to be benefited. Luckily, for technical reasons, which I need not explain, this clause has not been operative, or only to a small extent, not more than £20,000 of endowments having been dealt with. The administrative difficulty of the Act has been gigantic, and even my short experience at the Board of Education shows me that it was only brought into operation by the unsparing efforts of the officials both there and among the Local Authorities. Let me give two examples of these difficulties. The payments under the old system had to be made to different bodies from those created under the new system, so at first these latter had no money, and a system of temporary instalments was resorted to for three successive years until the Government itself disappeared and left it to its successors to place things on a stable basis. But a worse step was taken. An Act was passed called the Education Working Balances Act, and its object was to allow authorities to borrow in order to be able to set up a balance at the bank. I think that was an exceedingly bad principle, though 161 out of 327 authorities have resorted to it, because it involved paying interest on the balance all the year round, and consequently it was extremely extravagant. I wish now to summarise the results. A recent Return shows that the total rates collected by all the education authorities in the last year were £2,000,000 more than in the previous year, and now amount to £11,250,000. I estimate this year's increase at £1,000,000, and this will make in rates alone the total increase £5,000,000 in four years. In London for the three years of the operation of the Act the rates have been 1s. 2½d. 1s. 4d. and 1s. 7d. The Acts which have thrown this heavy burden on the rates have instituted a system of control tending to inefficiency and extravagance. One of the features of the old school board system was the extent to which it used voluntary help. The system of the Bill of 1902 has caused a great increase of officialism and administrative expenses, the latter now amounting to about £1,000,000. These are very serious results. A system in its nature extravagant and difficult to control has been set up, and the great bulk of the additional cost has been thrown not on the Exchequer, but on the local rates.

Now I come to deal with the present Bill. Its financial proposals are based on two principles—the promotion of an economical and efficient system of administration, the affording of relief to the local authority. The Bill sets up the principle of absolute local control, so that for the first time the local authorities will be masters in their own house. They will engage the teachers, and every branch of the service; they will make their own bargains with owners of schools in their own way. Everything that can be done by facilities for borrowing cheaply has been done to relieve localities in the cost of providing schools. The period of repayment has been extended, and a lower rate of interest provided. The Bill facilitates the acquisition and transfer of land, and it permits borrowing for playgrounds, equipments, and alterations. Country parishes have been relieved by an alteration of the clause in the last Act, whereby the parish is left with only a quarter of the cost of building a school instead of three-quarters or a half. The right hon. Member for Dover has unreasonably misrepresented this provision. In a speech at the Albert Hall the right hon. Gentleman treated this clause as a new proposal which would turn these areas into a howling wilderness, when, as a matter of fact, it is a drastic measure of relief. I think the right hon. Gentleman might have read the Bill before making that criticism. The great urban districts are granted autonomy, and we hope that what we have done will enable them to discharge their educational duties more efficiently and economically. The grant of £1,000,000 is for no mysterious scheme like that of 1902. We provide it for purposes of expenditure which are far more limited than those of the Act of 1902. As my right hon. friend has explained to the House, it will be largely applied to the reduction of rates in those districts where provision has to be made for the purposes of the Bill. The Bill makes endowments available for the purpose for which they were intended. The House should not be led away by the denunciations of these clauses. I will do my hon. friends opposite the justice of saying that when they so heartily denounced the clauses they did not understand what was proposed. They are simple in their object, and I think that when they are understood by the House no reasonable person will see any objection to them. The disposition of the Government towards the schools is generous and sympathetic. No financial support is necessarily withdrawn. But it is almost impossible to understand the action of the Government without going outside the limits of the Bill. I will put one illustration before the House on a matter already referred to—I mean the case of the necessitous schools. One of the worst changes the late Government made was the doing away with all special treatment of the necessitous school districts. The proposals for relieving them will command general approval. Necessitous districts suffer for three reasons. The children are an unduly large proportion of the population. Barking stands at the head of such districts with 240 children at school to every 1,000 of the population, and Bexhill is the lowest with 97. In many of these urban districts such as West Ham the children in elementary schools represent a fifth of the population. Then in these places the rates are very high, often 10s. in the £, expenses of building schools are great, and there is much poverty. I think it will be recognised from the explanation I have given that the Government desire to do all in its power to simplify and improve the system of educational finance. There is a great deal to be done, and I should like to see some movement towards consolidating the Acts under which the various grants are given, as even the names of these grants have now only a historic interest. I think there should be one consolidated grant. Then I think an improvement would be made if all the schools would adopt the same school year. All such improvements do not need legislation, but they would meet difficulties, facilitate economies, and assist the localities. The need of every effort is apparent when we realize the total cost of the service. With the additional grant the estimates this year amount to £13,750,000, when we add the rates this makes £26,000,000 for England and Wales alone. If we add to this, say £5,500,000 for the total cost in Scotland and Ireland, the charge for Education in the United Kingdom is £31,500,000. Therefore it represents at this moment the heaviest, as it is the most important, branch of State expenditure, I appeal to hon. Members to take as favourable a view as they can of a Bill which, according to the right hon. Member for Oxford University, preserves intact the framework of the Act of 1902. The proposals are liberal, moderate, and conciliatory. They may be a little costly for a time, and put restraint upon extreme views, but in so far as they carry out reforms without unnecessarily reversing the policy of the predecessors of the Government, they form an illustrious example of the spirit that has contributed so much to the stability of British institutions.

*Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I believe the hon. Gentleman said that the education policy of the late Government was bad, but he did not succeed in proving that the rates in the City of Westminster had risen by 70 per cent. in the last three years in consequence.

*Mr. LOUGH: I said that the education rate had advanced by 70 per cent. in seven years.

*Lord BALCARRES: I quite understand that, but the hon. Gentleman has not given the House the basis of his misleading estimate. I confess that I do not see how this Bill remedies the extravagance which has been laid to the charge of the Party now in opposition. I see no suggestion of economy, treating economy as a saving of money, in any part of this Bill. I do not call extending the period for the repayment of loans for public buildings good economy; it is most extravagant. I trust the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not allow that system to pervade other branches of his Department. The Secretary to the Board of Education, in a moment of pessimism, rather gave away the whole case when he said the scheme might be a little costly for a time. This scheme will be costly, and the sum of £1,000,000 provided in the Bill will be wholly insufficient to meet the new charges which will have to be met. Turning to the effect of Clauses 3 and 4 of the Bill on the local authorities, I maintain that the President of the Board of Education gave no reason in his speech to justify Clause 4, except that in his opinion a certain elasticity ought to be introduced into urban areas. Why should this distinction be drawn between town and country? It is illogical, partial, and unfair. I consider that the dual system is most unfair. The explanation of the distinction has been given by the Secretary for India, who admitted that the clause was introduced to satisfy the conscientious scruples of the non-Protestant minority. I am in favour of their scruples being satisfied, but I do not see why their rights or the rights of other communities which are equal and concurrent should be taken away and solemnly regranted in the form of favours. The conditions attending the operation of Clause 4 will colour and control the whole of our local and civic life. The means of evasion are such that they will not only invite, but force, local authorities into the innermost religious strife from which they have hitherto been free. The hon. Gentleman is optimistic in regard to the attitude of the local authorities. The only condition imposed in the Bill is that they must consider an application, but there is no appeal from their decision. The Minister for Education was most eloquent, in introducing the Bill, in stating that the local authorities should be trusted to be fair-minded; but denominationalists have not always been treated with complete fairness and equitableness, for instance in Wales, and even in London. The right hon. Gentleman says that the English people have a positive genius for the administration of their laws. He did not use the word "British" people; perhaps he had in his mind the Scottish extraction of himself and myself; and he deliberately excluded the countrymen of the President of the Board of Trade. Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us why the scheme is limited to urban areas? He tells us he wants elasticity, but I cannot see why he should limit the population to 5,000. That in itself is a hardship to the Church of England. The Chancellor of the Duchy, speaking yesterday attacked us severely, though not in the provocative manner of the President of the Board of Trade. We oppose this Bill because the members of the Church of England think that it inflicts injustice upon us. Under the special facilities clause the Jewish community can save 100 per cent. of its schools; the Wesleyans 52 per cent.; the Roman Catholics 77 per cent., but the Church of England, which educates five times as many children as any other denomination, can only save 25 per cent. of its schools. Is it not natural that we should feel some sense of injustice? Is it not inevitable under these circumstances that we should feel that we were being harshly treated, and if we use strong language should be pardoned?

MR. PAUL (Northampton): Who use strong language?

*LORD BALCARRES: Members of the Church of England.

MR. PAUL: I am a member of the Church of England.

*LORD BALCARRES: And as such the hon. Member is entitled to support the Bill, but when I say "we" I mean the vast majority of the Church of England, and I do not know whether the hon. Member claims that if he were to appeal to the Church people in his constituency, they would agree with him that it is a Bill of a fair or honourable character towards their Church. At any rate, some members of the Church to which I belong feel that this Bill is a grave act of injustice. Four-fifths of the parents can demand facilities, but why not a half, or a bare majority? Surely that is the more simple method of ascertaining the view of the parish. The President of the Board of Education reminded us that minorities must suffer. It is indeed the badge of all their tribe, but does the right hon. Gentleman infer that the minority in this country is the Church of England, the Roman Catholics, or the Jews, the three chief denominations which together oppose this Bill? I do not think it can be said that the Church is in a minority, and I think the right hon. Gentleman ought to have more regard to the rights of the majority than he has shown by this Bill. With regard to the position of the teacher, why is the teacher in the town to be allowed to give this religious teaching while the teacher in the country is refused that permission? The distinction between two days and five days is, like the distinction between town and country, illogical, meaningless, and probably unjust. The House has not yet learned from the speeches which have been delivered what is going to be the precise relationship between the local authority and the teacher in the school. The right hon. Gentleman informed a deputation that the intention of the clause is that the teachers should remain the same as they are—those who are most qualified to give the particular religious instruction which hitherto has been given in the school. That required a little amplification. It presumably does not apply exclusively to the living generation of teachers. When the teacher dies or is promoted, or retires, is a man to succeed him who will fulfil the conditions laid down by the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. BIRRELL: That is what I meant.

*LORD BALCARRES: Then the whole claim of the right hon. Gentleman to have abolished tests is gone. The late Government in 1902 were more frank. They did not put into their Bill a clause saying that they were going to abolish teachers' tests and then allow it to be dragged out of them by a deputation waiting upon the Minister that the intention of the clause was illusory, and that the tests as they now exist in voluntary schools in the country are in the future to continue as in the past. Much balm will therefrom come to the soul of the passive resister! The permissive clause is the most objectionable of all, because it will create strife within the local authorities where strife does not now exist. There is practically no strife now except on the political platform and in the political Press. I wrote the other day to the chairman of the Lancashire Education Committee who has had more practical experience of education than any living man, and I asked how far the religious difficulty showed itself by the withdrawal of children, and he replied—

> "We have no information as to the children withdrawn by their parents from religious instruction. This is not notified to us."

This is a matter which does not affect the life of the school. It is somewhat significant in a county like Lancashire where our feelings on this subject are very deep, that this gentleman does not think it worth while to make inquiry into the point as to whether children are withdrawn from religious instruction or not. Yet this is a county where the people are sufficiently manly and independent to have no scruple in withdrawing their children if they desire to do so, any more than they would have any scruple in sending their children to a Congregational church, or in going themselves to any particular place of worship they might choose as opposed to any other. This clause introduces deliberately religious strife into every local area. To secure your four-fifths majority you will have to have a religious canvas. Does any Member want that? Having got your majority you must immediately make efforts to retain it, and one form those efforts will take will be to do away with Sub-clause B. Wherever there are not two schools the four-fifths majority clause would be altogether worthless unless we could at once get a small school built to accommodate the balance of our children from the voluntary school, and that is not desirable. The removal of a few children, the migration of half-a-dozen families, the opening of a new mill, or of a new seam of coal,—all these things must readily and quickly change the conditions under which these facilities are granted. Then you would have inquiries re-opened and the old intrigues and constant fights on the local authority. But even as this clause is drafted, even before the withdrawal operates we should be entitled to re-open all these questions. The long and short of it is that there is going to be perpetual strife, confusion and intrigue, owing to the apple of discord wilfully thrown down by the Board of Education. The right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Education said that if these facilities were illusory they would be a fraud. I take his own words, and I go further. There is no logic in them, no stability, and no security. They mean constant friction where there is now no friction; constant friction in the town councils, for instance, where in ninety-nine cases out of 100 there is now absolutely no difficulty on religious questions. [AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!] Does the hon Member say that in ninety-nine cases out of 100 there is friction [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] But under this Bill you are going to introduce it, because a town council, however wrongly the hon. Member may think, will be elected from one side and the other by people who in this case take a most profound interest in the religious question. I do not believe the right hon. Gentleman has realised his responsibility towards religious denominations. He has miscalculated the depth of the convictions of Churchmen, but he has also miscalculated our strength. We are told that the alternative to this clause is secular education or secularism, whatever it may be called—the exclusion of any sort of religious teaching from our schools. That is a threat [MINISTERIAL Cries of "No"]—a threat at least to those who believe in religious education, and history does not show that that form of threat is one of which denominationalists need be afraid. I deny emphatically that secularism is the alternative. It is admitted in all quarters of the House that the country will not at this time stand secularism, and it is my firm belief that the right hon. Gentleman will find it sufficiently difficult to pass his Bill with Clause 4 in it; but if he excludes the clause with a view to introducing secularism, he will find it absolutely impossible.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned"—(*Mr. Bryce*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [7th May], "That Major Dunne be one other Member of the Select Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill."

Question again proposed.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said that the Labour Party had no personal or political objection to the members of this Committee, whose names they were now opposing; they were objecting to them on a question of principle, and not upon any other ground whatever. He hoped the House, in considering this matter, would keep that fact well in mind. He wished to say, as representing those who sat on the Labour Benches, that in the past they thought the Patronage Secretary had, on the whole, met their claims fairly, and they attributed no blame to him upon that score. The action they were taking in reference to this particular Committee was based upon two grounds. The Labour Members who sat on those benches had been returned to Parliament to represent certain definite principles; they were entitled to representation upon all important Committees, and particularly upon those Committees directly affecting the working classes. That was a frank statement of their claim. Why had this particular Committee been so constituted as to exclude a Member of the Labour Party? The Secretary to the Treasury had admitted that if the Committee had consisted of fifteen Members, the Labour Party would have had a Member upon it. In a matter of such importance as this Committee was appointed to consider, the matter should have been so arranged as to entitle the Labour Party to be represented upon it. The appointment of such a Committee was not, and should not be, a matter of vulgar fractions. He and his friends claimed to be entitled to representation on all Committees concerning the working classes. From whom had objection come against the Labour Members being represented on the Committee? Had the Whips on the Opposition side or the Irish Whips made any objection? If no objection had been raised, then he should expect the Patronage Secretary to explain why the Labour Party had been so excluded. They said that, as a Labour Party, paid by Labour organisations, and directly representing Labour opinions, they were entitled to representation on a Committee of this kind. For that reason they would divide the House against the name now proposed.

*MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said that after what had taken place in reference to the Motion before the House he thought the House would not consider him unreasonable if he claimed their indulgence for a short time. It was a matter of no concern to him what his hon. friends chose to label themselves, but, when they proceeded to rule those who like himself sat on that side of the House as outside the rank of Labour representatives [Cries of "No"], then he thought they were justified in protesting against such an act of excommunication. What special right had his hon. friends on the other side to be considered as the representatives of Labour that they who sat on the Ministerial side of the House had not an equal claim to? They were trade unionists, they stood at the head of large Labour organisations which they had built up. Their claim in both these respects was infinitely superior to the claim of some of those who claimed to be members of the Labour Party. They had been workmen. They had worked in the mine and in the factory side by side with those who sent them to this House. They were paid, and he was not ashamed to admit it, as hon. Gentleman claimed to be paid on the other side. He knew it was the fashion amongst some of his hon. friends like the hon. Member for Leicester to write them down as nondescript Labour Members, but he defied him or any other member of the Labour Party to cite a claim as unique as his own to be regarded as a Labour representative. He was not ashamed to admit that twenty-one years ago he was earning his bread as a working miner when the delegates representing the constituency which he now had the honour to represent in this House asked him to leave his work to represent them here, which he had done ever since. When any one of his hon. friends opposite could show a claim as unique as that, then they might claim in a special sense to be Labour representatives. His hon. friend the Member for Woolwich had said that those men who sat on the Liberal side and claimed —let them mark the word—to be Labour Members were Liberals pure and simple. He ventured to say that even if they did claim that it was as *bona fide* as the claim of any hon. Member opposite. It was a matter of public notoriety that his hon. friend the Member for Wooliwch for many months in the last Parliament refused to sign the pledge of the Independent Labour Party. Yet was there any one of the Labour Members who regarded his hon. friend as less of a Labour representative because of that? If the signing of a pledge was to be the credential for becoming a member of the Labour Party then they would get many men whose hands had never been soiled with honest toil ready and willing to sign. He, therefore, entered his strongest possible protest to the argument that because they sat on the Ministerial side of the House they were not entitled to be regarded as Labour representatives. One of the Members of the proposed Committee, the hon. Member for Birkenhead, had as noble a record as a Labour representative and a trade unionist as it was possible for any man to have. In addition to that he had exceptional qualifications for service upon the Committee now in question by reason of the work in which he had been engaged so directly and efficiently for many years past. He had devoted his time more closely to the question of the housing of the working classes than probably any other Labour representative in the House, and in nominating him to sit upon this Committee the Government had acted wisely and well. He would ask his hon. friends to remember that on Thursday last week they were given a place on a Committee to deal with the question of the taxation of land values in Scotland and no objection was raised, and he thought Labour representatives who sat on the Ministerial side were entitled on this occasion to have a member of their own group.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): We welcome you.

*MR. FENWICK said he was glad that claim was admitted, but if they claimed representation on Party lines his hon. friends opposite were only entitled as a separate and distinct Party to claim representation in proportion to their numbers. He understood the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil went one better than that, and claimed in addition representation in consequence of the special position which he and his friends occupied as representing Labour constituencies, His hon. friend could not claim it on both grounds. If he was content to take it on purely Party lines he must take his fair representation, and if the Government was not prepared to extend the Committee then he would have to be content with the fair representation in proportion to the number of the Party he controlled. But when the hon. Gentleman went outside and claimed it on special grounds his position was no stronger than, if indeed it was as strong as, the claim of his hon. friends who sat on the Ministerial side. There were a number of members of the so-called Labour Party who were trade union leaders and who stood at the head of great trade organisations, but what was true of those Gentlemen was not equally true of every member of the Party, and for them to attempt to rule others outside the pale of Labour representation was, in his opinion, sufficient justification for rising as he did to-night to enter a protest.

*MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said he was very sorry that the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division should have treated the matter as a question between the representatives of Labour on one side of the House and the representatives of Labour on the other. He was perfectly sure that if he knew the true history of this question he would have spoken differently. On no single occasion had they ever raised any objection to or questioned in any way any nomination from amongst the hon. Gentleman's friends on any Committee. If there was an issue between himself and his friends and some other Party in the House, it was between them and the Patronage Secretary and the Party on whose behalf he acted. In these circumstances he thought the question raised in the speech to which they had just listened would have been better raised round a table among themselves. He had not the privilege of listening to the speech of his hon. friend the Member for Woolwich, but he had read it, and he agreed with every word he said. It was as well that they should know where they were in this matter. What was the position? The Patronage Secretary had decided for himself how many Parties there were in the House. He and his friends refused to accept the decision of the Patronage Secretary as to what constituted a Party. That was the whole question, and they did not accept the suggestion that one of the members of the group opposite with which they were not connected represented them on this Committee. What he should have preferred would have been that the Party to which he belonged had been told that they were entitled or that they were not entitled to representation. He hoped there would be no further cavilling as between what was known as the trade union Party and the Party with which he acted. The Independent Labour Party did not sit in the House as supporters of the Government, and did not accept the Government whips. That was the clean division between them and those who sat as supporters of the Government, and the House ought to recognise it. He was exceedingly sorry that the issue had been raised between the two sections. It had never been raised in that form by himself and his friends. The Government had chosen to select certain men first from one group and then from the other to serve on these Committees. It might happen that under such a system they would be without representation on some of the most important Committees; and they would never accept such a position. They sat in the House as a separate Party; they did not accept the Government whips, and they claimed sufficient independence to entitle them to representation on every Committee. If the Government did not think the Labour Party strong enough to claim the right of representation, then let them say so at once, and the Labour Party would see where they were. Although at present their numbers were small, they might come back sixty or eighty strong. Did the Government consider thirty Members a "miserable minority"? In many ways it was effective. If the Government gave them a representation of one, it did not follow that that Member would oppose the Government. In the House they had always treated all questions from a public point of view. They were independent, and in nine cases out of ten they voted with the Government. The Government would do wisely to recognise them and not to set them in competition against their friends who sat on the Government side of the House.

MR. BRACE (Glamorganshire, S.) said this discussion was to him one of the most painful experiences of his life, and he would not have interposed were it not that his hon. friend the Member for the Clitheroe Division had failed to appreciate the position of the trade union group of Labour Members. It seemed to be thought that, because the trade union group received the whips of the Liberal Party, they were, of necessity, supporters of the Government under all circumstances and were controlled by the Liberal Party. That was simple nonsense. The receiving of the Party whips was a small, and to him an unimportant, matter. The real touchstone as to whether they were supporters of the Government was not in the reception of the whips, but their action in the division lobbies; and time and again he and his friends had voted against the Government. If this claim were upheld, and he made no objection to it, the trade union group would, for its own protection, make the same claim to be recognised as a separate Party and to be entitled to representation on Committees.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) said he had little to add to what he had said on this question last night. He was, in some respects, the trustee of all the Parties and sections in the House, and he ventured to conceive that it was his business, as Chief Whip, to endeavour, as fairly as he could, to make all the Committees as represenative of every section of the House as was possible. Hon. Gentlemen opposite claimed a representative on every Committee. Such a claim was preposterous and an absolute impossibility. The Labour Party were entitled to have one-twenty-third of the representation on these Committees, and yet, out of seventeen Committees which had been appointed, they were represented on no fewer than thirteen. The hon. Member for South Glamorgan had described the position exactly. If the Labour Party set up this claim, then the trade union group were entitled to make the same claim, the Ulster Unionists might claim to be a separate Party, and even another group which had been set up this very session, a group dealing with the Highlands of Scotland, might put forward the same demand for representation. He had taken a great deal of trouble to try to conciliate hon. Members opposite. He had explained to them that in the circumstances their claim was unreasonable, and that the question was a question of principle upon which the Government were bound to take their stand.

Mr. CROOKS said he would be the last man in the world to suggest that his friends opposite were not, in the best sense of the word, Labour representatives; but they were chosen as part and parcel of the Liberal Party and could not claim to represent the Independent Labour Party. There were many Members in the House who might put themselves up and declare themselves to be Labour representatives. The noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone claimed to be returned to the House by the working men of that borough and the right hon. Member for West Birmingham might make a similar claim. It was quite clear to those who sat beside him that the Committee would not be perfect if they shut out the hon. Member for Birkenhead, who would represent expert knowledge. The Independent Labour Party numbered thirty. They were sent to Parliament under certain conditions, and had special experience of the subject to be considered by the Committee. Yet they were told that their opinion was to be represented by men on the other side of the House! It was to be understood that they were not fighting the nominee of the Patronage Secretary, but they claimed to be a distinct Party, and demanded recognition as such. It was said that their argument might apply to the Ulster Unionists, and that these should have a special representative; but the Ulster Unionists were part and parcel of the Conservative Party. [Cries of "Divide."] Hon. Gentlemen had hansoms to go home in, or motor-cars; the Labour Party had not, yet they did not wish to hurry up the division. They were fighting this point out with the Whip of the Liberal Party. That hon. Gentleman had put his Party in a false position by declaring that the Labour Party were represented by the Gentleman he had nominated.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELY said he did not say that the Labour Party on that side of the House was represented on the Committee; but he said that labour was represented.

Mr. CROOKS said that that was all very nice, but, as had been said already, every Member of the House might claim that he represented labour. The claim of the Independent Labour Party was that as this Committee was to deal with a matter closely connected with the working classes, they were entitled to special consideration. But really the whole system of nominating these Committees on the principle of Party strength was entirely wrong. He thought that the nation had a right to the services of the best men in the House irrespective of the Party to which they might belong.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 320; Noes, 43. (Division List No. 70.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Acland-Hood, Rt Hn Sir Alex. F.
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir

Mr. George Whiteley.

Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt. Hon.SirH.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A.(Finsbury, E.)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,John Williams(Devonp'rt
Benn, W.(T'wr Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brodie, N. C.
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn.SydneyCharles
Cairns, Thomas
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.HnRichard Knight
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats,Sir T. Glen(Renfrew,W.)
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir.Wm.J(S.Pancras,W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,C.H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Courthope, G. Loyd
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J.(Tynemouth)
Crombie, John William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Dalrymple, Viscount
Davies,David (MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh,S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson,W.H.(St. Pancras,N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Forster, Henry William
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gladstone,Rt.Hn HerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haddock, George R.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Colonel Ivor(Mon.,S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Hill, Sir Clement(Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley(Staff'sh.)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope,W. Bateman(Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneton)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Keswick, William
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras,E.
Leese, Sir Joseph F (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A.Levy(Essex,Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald,J.M. (Falkirk.B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M‘Crae, George
M‘Kenna, Reginald
M‘Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M‘Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M‘Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall(Lincoln)
Marks,G Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J.Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncaster
Nield, Herbert
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson,Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Pearson,W. H. M. (Suffolk,Eye
Pease,HerbertPike(Darlington
Philipps,Col. Ivor(S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford, E)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards,Thomas(W. Monm'th

Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick, B.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E.
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Valentia, Viscount
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Wallace, Robert
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W Dudley (Southampton
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson, A. (Elgin and Nairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, Hon. C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Bottomley, Horatio
Bull, Sir William James
Byles, William Pollard
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Crooks, William
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Fell, Arthur
Gill, A. H.
Glover, Thomas
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Higham, John Sharp
Hodge, John
Hudson, Walter
Jenkins, J.
Jowett, F. W.
Kelley, George D.
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Macpherson, J. T.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
O'Grady, J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Snowden, P.
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Thorne, William
Walsh, Stephen
Wardle, George J.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wilkie, Alexander
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Arthur Henderson and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald.

Mr. Mackarness, Mr. Morrell, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Vivian, Mr. T. R. Bethell, Mr. Lane-Fox, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Abel Smith, and Mr. Ginnell nominated other Members of the Select Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That five be the quorum.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

ALIENS BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

And it being after half-past Eleven of the clock on Tuesday Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 9*th May*, 1906.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Southampton Gas Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Sutton, Southcoates, and Drypool Gas Bill, Waterford Corporation and Bridge Bill, reported, with Amendments. Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Aspatria Pits; Burslem; East Leeds; East Lothian; Featherstone Main; Hunslet Carr; Llettys Lenkin; Mid Lothian; Rounds Green; Strafford Main; Wednesbury; and Whitehaven Pits Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Forfarshire, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law: from Allonby; Armitage Bridge; Benson (two); Bilston (two); Bradley (two); Brightstone; Brownwood Park; Castleside (two); Chaffcombe (two); Charlton Adam; Chilcomb; Chorley; Crawley; Crawthorne; Earl's Court; Finchley; Flushing; Framlingham and Saxtead; Hamsterley (two); Harvington; Hawkehurst (two); Heversham; Highgate; Hinkley; Holme Cultram; Holton; Horsington; Hurst; Ingatestone and Fryerning; Kensington; Kingsdon (two); Lawford (three); Llanvihangel (two); London (three); Moordown; Muswell Hill (two); Nash Manor and Lisworney (two); North Cheriton (two); Northfield; Norwich; Outwood (two); Preston (two); Rusholme; St. Michael at Bowes; Salford; South Shields (two); Spennymoor (two); Stillingfleet; Stoke upon Trent; Stoulton; Stretford (two); Stroud Green; Tewin (two); Tysoe; Waterhead; Willington; Winchester (five); and Winteringham; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from South Shields, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT 1901 AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from South Shields, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Corstophine in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC AMBULANCE SERVICE (LONDON).

Petition from Kensington, for the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute against; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petitition from Bristol for repeal; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Interim Report of Anti-Typhoid Inoculation Committee (by Command), to lie upon the Table.

NAVY.

Copies presented, of Reports of Departmental Committees appointed to consider certain questions concerning the Extension of the New Scheme of Training for Officers of the Navy, etc., (by Command), to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT).

Return presented, relative thereto [*Sir Henry Fowler*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 162.)

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd April; *Mr. McKenna*] to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 163.)

WALNEY LIGHT DUTIES.

Return ordered, "of the Accounts of the Receipts and Expenditure of the Walney Light Duties as rendered to the Board of Trade, in accordance with Section 20 of the Furness Railway Act, 1894, for each of the last three years."—(*Major Seely.*)

ILLITERATE VOTERS (GENERAL ELECTION, 1906.)

Address for "Return showing the number of persons who voted as Illiterates at the General Election of 1906 in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. Crooks.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Examinations for Indian Forestry Service.

MR. BUTCHER (Cambridge University): To ask the Secretary of State for India how many examinations have been held for the Indian Forestry Service since the spring of 1895; how many candidates entered for each examination, and how many passed; and whether any candidates have been taken into the service without examination.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) Eleven examinations have been held since the spring of 1895. The following are the figures of candidates who entered and who passed.

Year.	Number of Candidates.	Number selected for Vacancies.
1895 .	22	6
1896 .	22	6
1897 .	18	6
1898 .	16	6
1899 .	16	7
1900 .	22	
1901 .	17	10
1902 .	16	8
1903 .	17	8
1904 .	21	11

In 1905, owing to discussions which were raised as to the method of training probationers in this country, it was impossible to publish the conditions until a very late date; and it was probably owing to this fact that only four candidates presented themselves, of whom two passed. Thereupon, to meet the requirements of the Government of India, thirteen additional men were selected without examination from among candidates who offered themselves in response to an invitation widely circulated among educational institutions. These probationers will, however, like their predecessors, have to satisfy further tests before they are finally admitted to the Indian Forest Service.

Payment of Irish Education Grants.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can arrange that the annual capitation grant for Irish primary education should be paid immediately on the termination of the year, and not three months after date as at present.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer to the reply which I gave to the similar

Question of the hon. Member for North Westmeath on March 5th.†

Postmen's Pensions.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): To ask the Postmaster-General whether postmen of thirty-seven years service and upwards, having an exemplary character, are entitled to any pension on being retired by the Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Yes, if they are established officers.

Delay in Delivery of Mr. John Nunan's Letters.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will explain why letters addressed to Mr. John Nunan, M.C.C., who has changed his residence from Johnstown, Glanworth, to Cregg, Fermoy, of which change of address the postmaster at Glanworth was duly notified, have been, in some instances, sent to the returned letter office, thereby causing delay and inconvenience.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Inquiries are being made with regard to the matter to which the hon. Member refers, and I will communicate the result to him as early as possible.

Irish Land Purchase—Stamp Duty.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he has given the further consideration promised to the suggested amendment of the Finance Acts for the purpose of relieving tenant purchasers in Ireland from the payment of stamp duty in respect of the redemption value on the loans made to them by the State for the purchase of their holdings; and whether, as it was never intended that such duty should be leviable, the matter will be dealt with by a new clause in the Finance Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave him on March 28th.‡ I cannot admit that it was never intended that such duty should be leviable.

French Barley Duty.

MR. STARKEY (Nottinghamshire, Newark): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the temporary admission of barley into France upon which the duty is remitted still continues; and also what amount of French malt was imported into this country last month.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The system of "temporary admission" under which the import duty on barley is remitted, on condition of an equivalent quantity of malt being exported, is still in operation in France. The quantity of French malt imported into the United Kingdom during the last month was 350 cwts.

Telegraph Guarantees.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthenshire, W.): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the proposed alteration in telegraph guarantees in rural districts, whereby the Postmaster-General takes two-thirds of the risk, will apply to existing guarantees or only to those entered into after the passing of the Finance Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The concession will apply to all existing guarantees from the 30th of April last.

Income-Tax Committee—Methods of Assessment and Collection.

MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the reference to the new Committee upon the Graduation of the Income-tax will include an inquiry into the present methods of assessment and collection.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The reference to the Committee, which has been approved by the House, is to consider the practicability of graduating the amount of the tax and of differentiating between permanent and precarious incomes. It will be for the Committee to determine how far an inquiry into the present methods of assessment and collection is necessary or relevant to the subject of the investigation.

Transfer of the Sparkbrook Factory.

MR. MADDISON (Burnley): To ask the Secretary of State for War if the negotiations for the transfer of the Sparkbrook Gun Factory were begun by the present Government.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 55.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1288.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The negotiations for the transfer of Sparkbrook Factory were begun by the late Government.

Infant Mortality—Suggested Appointment of Departmental Committee.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that the Report of the Registrar-General indicates a serious condition of things as regards infant mortality in certain large industrial towns and areas, he will consider the advisability of appointing a Departmental Committee to investigate the causes of such mortality, with power to call for special Reports from, or institute inquiry into, the towns and areas concerned.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I am fully alive to the importance of this question, and, as my hon. friend will see from an Answer which I gave yesterday, the Local Government Board are taking active steps to ascertain the causes of excessive infant mortality with a view to the adoption of remedial measures. I may mention that a conference, which will be attended by a large number of representatives of municipalities, is shortly to be held to consider the whole question, and I understand that it is to be presided over by my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board. I do not think that, under these circumstances, it is necessary to appoint a Departmental Committee.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Devonport Dockyard—Employment of Women.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it was on the grounds of economy alone that females were introduced to do the work hitherto done by men in the upholstery and polishing departments of the Devonport dockyard; how many men in each trade were discharged as a result of women being employed; what are the average weekly wages of the women, dating from March, 1905, to March, 1906; and what proportion of the women are married.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The introduction of female labour at Devonport was largely experimental, and was based on the fact that the class of work on which these women are employed has for some years been performed by women in large private shipbuilding establishments. Economy without sacrificing efficiency was aimed at. No men were discharged from the dockyard as a consequence of the change, but seven men who had been previously employed on upholstering sewing work were found other employment. The average weekly wage of the women during the whole time referred to was 15s. 9d., but this is exclusive of payment of 6s. per week given to the working chargewoman since January 22nd last only. Out of thirteen women employed, five are married and eight single or widows.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tdyvil): What were the wages paid to the men on the same class of work?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked for notice of that Question.

Boys and Naval Construction.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the order issued by his Department that in future no more apprentices in His Majesty's dockyard at Portsmouth are to be awarded naval construction scholarships, in spite of the results hitherto obtained, he will say whether this order is intended to practically exclude dockyard boys from the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors unless they can obtain admission through the medium of a King's or Whitworth scholarship; and whether, by this order, it is intended to give better opportunities to private students at the expense of the lads in the dockyards.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No such order as that mentioned has been issued.

Naval Construction.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the fact that the new French naval programme for this year consists of six battleships of large dimensions; and that the German naval programme of two large battleships and two small cruisers has been augmented by the addition of one large armoured cruiser; and whether he has any official information showing that the six French battleships and one German armoured cruiser are additions to the programmes of the Powers since the Admiralty decided to reduce our last year's programme by one armoured cruiser, and framed this year's programme of four armoured vessels as announced in Lord Cawdor's statement of Admiralty policy.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Answer is in the affirmative.

The Native Rising in South Africa—Bambaata.

MR. J. WARD: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can say under what law the native chief Bambaata has been declared an outlaw, and a price placed upon his head; what was his original act of rebellion; if captured, what court will try him for the offences charged against him; and what action the Secretary of State for the Colonies has taken to secure the Imperial reservation lands belonging to the innocent part of his tribe from illegal confiscation.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The offer of a reward for Bambaata was, I understand, made as an executive act and not under any law. It has since been withdrawn by the Natal Government. The information the Secretary of State has received from the Governor is that a serious faction fight took place some time ago between two divisions of the tribe of which Bambaata is the Chief. The case was tried in the civil courts, and it was found that Bambaata had been fomenting these disturbances. It was decided to relieve Bambaata of the control of his tribe. Taking advantage of the general disturbed condition of the country, he refused to submit himself to the authority of the Government and declined to leave his kraal when summoned to Maritzburg. I am not in a position to give a definite Answer to the third Question, but the presumption is that he will be tried by a civil court. There is no question of illegal confiscation of any of the land to which the hon. Member refers as "Imperial reservation lands" but which is, I understand, more properly described as land administered under the Natal Native Trust for the use of natives. A new chief was appointed for the main section of the tribe, which remained loyal to the Government, and the rest, 261 huts in all, have been placed under the jurisdiction of other chiefs.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that Bambaata is merely a passive resister?

Transvaal Settlers' Ordinance.

SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government will make inquiries as to the technical disabilities under the Settlers' Ordinance of the Transvaal, which the Commissioner of Lands, in his Report of November 1st, 1905, described as practically excluding land purchase and reducing very greatly the scope of the policy of State-aided settlement; and whether, if such disabilities are still in operation, they will cause them to be removed.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has recently been informed by Lord Selborne that the Land Board has been asked to consider and report upon whether any amendments, and, if so, what amendments, should be made to the Settlers and Crown Lands Disposal Ordinance of 1902 and 1903 respectively so as to facilitate and improve the administration of any funds available for the encouragement of agricultural settlers in the country, and for the settlement of existing Crown Lands.

Tibetan Indemnity.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, having regard to the fact that the Convention with China does not alter the amount of the Tibetan indemnity in any way, he is now able to give any information regarding the payment of the first instalment of that indemnity which was due on January 1st last.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): Now that the Convention with China is signed, early payment of the first instalment of the Tibetan indemnity may be looked for. But I am not yet in a position to give definite information.

Akabah Railway.

*CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state how much of the railway from Smyrna to Akabah is now completed; if there are any breaks in the line, what number; and, if so, of what length each break is.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury, for Sir EDWARD GREY): There is direct railway communication between Smyrna and Eregli. Between Eregli and Hama, a distance of approximately 220 miles, there is as yet no railway communication. There is a line open from Hama to Mudevvere, and from this point to Akabah the railway is not completed, and the distance is about 100 miles.

*CAPTAIN FABER: Are the uncompleted portions nearly finished?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I must ask for notice of that.

Vehicular Accidents in London.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number of accidents in the London area during the month of April last from motor-buses and motor cars respectively; in how many instances have personal injuries resulted; and in how many cases have such injuries proved fatal.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): During the month of April, 1906, the number of accidents known by the police to have been caused by motor cars (including motor cycles) within the Metropolitan police district was 433. Of these 134 resulted in personal injury, and nine proved fatal. In the same month 424 accidents were caused by motor omnibuses, of which seventy-six resulted in personal injury, and three proved fatal. These figures do not include accidents caused by electric tram cars.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): How many accidents have occurred in the same period to horse-drawn vehicles?

*MR. GLADSTONE: I will get the figures.

Judicial Statistics for 1905.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney S): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the judicial statistics for the year 1905 will be issued; and whether, in view of the fact that the only statistics at present available are those for 1904, he will state the number of cases in which sentences were modified at the instance of the Home Office during the year 1905 on grounds affecting the original conviction.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The judicial statistics for 1905 cannot possibly be issued till towards the end of the present year. The number of cases in which the Prerogative of Mercy was exercised on grounds affecting the conviction—such as doubt of the prisoner's guilt—was 27.

Case of Mrs. Eva D'Angely.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): In postponing my Question to the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that in the case of Mrs. Eva D'Angely, as in that of Messrs. Gerothwohl and Lavalette, the presiding magistrate at Marlborough Street, while acquitting the accused, did not in any way censure the police for the arrest; whether he has received any report from the magistrate on the police evidence; and, if so, what action he proposes to take on it; I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman a Question of which I have given private notice—namely whether it is the fact that since Questions have been put down on this subject the lady and her husband have been constantly shadowed by the police; that last Friday there were six detectives outside their house, that last Saturday there were four and last Monday two; whether when they went to their solicitor yesterday they were shadowed by the police, and that on coming home a detective sat by the lady in the omnibus and two others followed in a hansom. I ask, further, whether a lady who has been acquitted by a magistrate is being thus shadowed by the Home Secretary's orders. I also wish to inquire whether it is the fact that a copy of the depositions in the case was refused yesterday by Mr. Denman to the lady's solicitor; and, if so, why.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The Answer to the last Question is that the magistrate acted in accordance with his usual practice, which is to refuse to give copies of the notes of evidence in a case where there has not been a conviction; but he informs me that if requested by myself he will be glad to furnish them, and I shall be willing to ask for them. With regard to the alleged shadowing, I received the hon. Gentleman's Question only five minutes ago, and I have no information on the subject. It is quite obvious that it was not done by my orders, if it were done at all.

MR. ASHLEY: I could not have given the right hon. Gentleman more notice, because I heard of the matter only twenty minutes ago. Will the right hon. Gentleman give orders that this nuisance shall cease?

*MR. GLADSTONE: I do not know that it exists. I cannot commit myself to an Answer before I make inquiries.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S): Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiries?

*MR GLADSTONE: Of course I will.

Settlement Estate Duty.

MR. RADFORD (Islington, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that in recent cases under The Finance Act, 1894, not covered by the case of In re Campbell or any other legal decision, the Commissioners of Inland Revenue have demanded Settlement Estate Duty on the capital required to produce in perpetuity annuities given by testators in general terms without any special fund being appropriated to provide the same, and that the result of such a demand is to impose an obligation to pay (in addition to Legacy Duty) Settlement Estate Duty not on the capital value of the annuity but on a larger sum, with the consequence that the duty in some cases amounts to 14 and 20 per cent. on the capital value of such annuities; and whether he will give directions to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to prevent such claims being made in the future in the case of simple annuities.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): Where Settlement Estate Duty is chargeable in respect of settled property as defined by the Finance Act, 1894, it is chargeable by the Statute upon the principal value of the property settled and not upon the principal value of the terminable interests whether annuities or life interests. The question whether the property is settled has to be determined with reference to the circumstances of each case. The gift of a simple annuity, neither charged on real or leasehold property, nor directed to be paid out of income, is not held to constitute a settlement giving rise to Settlement Estate Duty. If my hon. friend will supply me with particulars of any case or cases of hardship which he has in view, I shall be happy to investigate them.

Yarmouth Election Petition.

MR. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): I beg to ask Mr. Solicitor-General whether, in view of the evidence and decision of one Judge in the Yarmouth election petition, he will bring in legislation to prevent gross bribery and corruption by amending the Corrupt Practices Acts.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields): I may say that the evidence and proceedings in the Yarmouth petition will of course be considered, but obviously it would be premature at present to state if any or what legislation may follow.

Queen Victoria Memorial.

SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will state why a considerable portion of land on Primrose Hill, abutting on the Albert Road, has recently been railed off from the public use; what is the nature of the building operations which are now being carried on there; whether the buildings to be erected are of a permanent or temporary character;

and if he will undertake that the buildings in question shall be so designed as not to interfere with the picturesque character of the neigbourhood.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): About one-fifth of an acre has been railed off for a studio for Mr. Brock for his work on the Queen Victoria Memorial; the temporary building will be removed when the work is completed. From my knowledge of the elevation I am satisfied that it is not likely to interfere with the surrounding scenery. I will show the hon. Member the drawing, and I will have the building painted any colour the hon. Gentleman wishes.

Crofters Acts Amendment Bill.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is now in a position to state when the Crofters Acts Amendment Bill will be introduced.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): Preparations for the Bill are under progress, but I am not able now to make further statement.

MR. WEIR: Then are we to have no crofters legislation this session?

MR. SINCLAIR: I can add nothing to my Answer.

Sanitation in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that Dr. Bruce, the medical officer of health for Ross and Cromarty, expresses the opinion, in his report just issued, that the sanitation of the townships throughout the Island of Lewis is so extremely unsatisfactory that the public health problem is quite insoluble unless by a money grant from Parliament, with the expenditure supervised by Government surveyors; and will he state whether this recommendation has been under the consideration of the Local Government Board.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware of the expression of opinion by Dr. Bruce. As the hon. Member is aware, the whole question of the condition of the Lewis is receiving the earnest attention of Government and a detailed investigation is at present being made. Until it is completed I am unable to indicate what steps it may be possible or necessary to take to remedy the distressing conditions which have for some time been prevalent in the Lewis.

Western Highlands Excursion Steamers.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if care will be taken that the steamers plying along the coasts of the Western Highlands and the Islands of Scotland, which are largely used during the summer season, are inspected, with a view to ensure the satisfactory condition of the gear and boats.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): Yes, Sir. Every care is, and will be, taken to secure the satisfactory condition of the vessels to which my hon. friend refers, together with their gear and boats.

Irish Poor Rate Collectors.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether statutory authority has been conferred on the Irish Local Government Board to prescribe qualifications and disqualifications for poor rate collectors in Irish counties.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): The 83rd section of the Local Governmment Act, 1898, provides that the Local Government Board shall have the same power as regards collectors of the poor rate appointed by the county council, and their accounts as they would have if those collectors had continued to be officers of the guardians. The question whether this section authorises them to prescribe qualifications and disqualifications of candidates for the office of collector is one of law which, so far as I am aware, has never been decided by any Court, and upon which it would not be in accordance with the usual practice for me to express an opinion in replying to a Question in this House.

Management of Irish Fisheries.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the present inquiry into the working of the Department of Agriculture, evidence will be taken showing the constitution and working of the Scotch Fishery Board, with a view to placing Irish fisheries under a system of management and inspection such as already prevails in Scotland.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Question raised is one for the determination of the Committee, to whom I will forward the hon. Member's suggestion.

Examiners in the Irish Language.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he state whether any, and, if so, what class of persons are ineligible for holding the post of examiners in the Irish language in the intermediate system; and can he state the reason for this regulation.

*MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Commissioners of Intermediate Education that the conditions of eligibility for examinerships in Irish do not differ from the conditions which apply to examinerships generally. The only explicit ruling upon the subject of disqualification is contained in a decision of the Board that no one who teaches in a school or college in which pupils are prepared for the Board's examinations is eligible for an examinership. The reason for this decision is obvious.

The Royal Canal.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what explanation have the Board of Control of the Royal Canal to offer for having allowed that canal to be rendered unnavigable by and in the interest of the Midland Railway Company; for example, why do they allow the continuance of such leakage at the Spencer Dock as kept four boats with men idle for several days at Dublin last week for want of sufficient water to get away; will any compensation be made to those boatmen; and will any steps be taken, apart from the Commission of Inquiry, to compel the Midland Company to restore the canal to the condition in which that company acquired it.

*MR. BRYCE: As regards the first and last parts of this Question, I beg to say that I am making inquiries as to the constitution and powers of the Board of Control of the Royal Canal, and am, therefore, not at present prepared to make a statement on the subject. As regards the Spencer Dock, I am informed by the Board of Works that the leakage referred to arose from damage caused to the sill of the dock by an outgoing steamer. To fully repair the damage it will be necessary to close the dock for three weeks, and the railway company have already arranged for publication of the statutory notices that this will be done on June 1st. Meanwhile the company are making arrangements to keep the level of the water as high as possible. The question of compensation is one which lies between the railway company and the boat-owners.

MR. GINNELL: Will the Government allow the company, while purporting to carry out the repairs, to stop the traffic and yet not actually execute the work?

*MR. BRYCE: Of course the traffic must be stopped while the repairs are being done, and no longer.

Untenanted Lands in North Tipperary.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that on the townland of Ballinamona, convenient to the town of Cloughjordan, in North Tipperary, 600 acres of untenanted land, which for the past twenty years have been let for grazing purposes on the eleven months system by the late owner, Mr. Edward Kennedy, are now up for sale; and will he give instructions to the Estates Commissioners to purchase those lands, with the view of giving them to farmers' sons and labourers around, so as to help in stopping the tide of emigration.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that no proceedings for the sale of the untenanted land referred to have come before them. If the Commissioners should be furnished with particulars of the property for sale, including the name and address of the owner, they will consider the question whether they should purchase.

Fitzgerald-Tuthill Estate—Case of Thomas M'Grath.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say whether the Fitzgerald-Tuthill estate in Ballyloundaish, Herbertstown, county Limerick, has come before the Land Commission for sale to the tenants; and, if so, whether Thomas M'Grath, evicted tenant, or the planter Devitt from Cashell, has been returned as the tenant under the sale.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that proceedings for the sale of this estate have been instituted before them. Having learnt that Daniel Devitt, the present tenant of the holding formerly occupied by M'Grath, was prepared to surrender the same to M'Grath on receiving compensation, the Commissioners informed the vendor's solicitor of the course which they were prepared to adopt in the case. The Commissioners have not yet heard whether the parties are prepared to carry out the arrangement suggested.

Labourers' Cottages in Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the total number of cottages built, or about to be built, in the different unions in Kerry; the total amount of money raised in each union for this purpose; the total amount of expenses; the average cost per cottage; the rate of interest, sinking fund, and period of repayment at which money is loaned to local authorities; the amount and source of the Government contributions; and the rate per pound at present paid for labourers' cottages in the various unions.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that practically all the information asked for will be given in the Return for all Ireland, which was ordered by this House on March 13th, on the Motion of the hon. Member for North Kerry. It was to be made up to March 31st, and is now nearly complete. I would ask the hon. Member to await the presentation of that Return.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: When may we expect the Return?

MR. BRYCE: It is to be made up to March 31st, but it shall be presented at the earliest possible moment.

Trinity College, Kerry, Estates.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the acreage and valuation of lands held in Kerry by Trinity College, either as direct landlords or sub-let to grantees or lessees at the passing of the Land Act of 1903; what was the total annual rental payable to them for such lands at this period; how much has been sold by grantees or lessees; how much by Trinity College; and what price has Trinity College demanded from grantees and lessees for the redemption of their head rents.

MR. BRYCE: The information asked for in the first two sections of this Question will be found in the Report of the Trinity College Estates Commission. The Estates Commissioners inform me that no sales have take place under the Act of 1903 of lands in county Kerry of which Trinity College were the direct vendors. I have not been informed whether there have been any sales by grantees and lessees of Trinity College in this county. The Commissioners have no information as to the price which Trinity College may have demanded for the redemption of head rents; but in the absence of an agreement between the parties, the Judicial Commissioner has power to fix the redemption price.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the reason these tenants have not bought before is that the College demands twenty-six years purchase.

MR. BRYCE: I have not heard that.

Second Term Rents in County Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Patrick Flynn, of Ahalin, Knockaderry, Newcastle West, in the county of Limerick, tenant to the Hon. Gerald Fitzgerald of his farm, at a yearly rent of £50, went into court to have a second-term rent fixed after a period of seventeen years, and that the rent was confirmed by the Sub-Commissioners

Bagot and Faulkiner by order dated 31st March, 1906; and if he can say on what grounds that decision was arrived at.

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the Sub-Commissioners, Messrs. Bagot and Faulkiner, in fixing second term rent on the lands of Mrs. Bridget Flanagan, of Cooliska, Castlemahon, Newcastle West, held by her from the Hon. Gerald Fitzgerald, as trustee for Lady Fitzgerald, confirmed the old rent, and if he can say whether in fixing this rent the Commissioners took into consideration the increased cost of labour within the term, and the fall in price of agricultural produce.

MR. BRYCE: I have referred these Questions to the Land Commissioners, who inform me, as I have already stated in similar cases, that they do not think it right to discuss the result of the judicial decisions of sub-commission courts in reply to Questions in Parliament. The Commissioners point out that if any party to these cases is dissatisfied with the decision, he has the right of appeal. As regards the reference to the Hon. Mr. Justice Fitzgerald, the Commissioners inform me that this gentleman is only one of the trustees of the estate concerned, that he has no beneficial interest in the estate, and takes no part in its management, and that he is not aware that the proceedings in question were pending.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Are rents fixed seventeen years ago considered fair rents to-day?

MR. BRYCE: I had better have notice of that Question.

Agricultural Organisation Society.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state specifically all the purposes for which money has been paid by the Department of Agriculture to the Agricultural Organisation Society; the amount paid for each kind of work; what is the method adopted by the Department to satisfy itself that the money so paid is actually devoted to the purpose for which it was granted; what are the other forms of organisation which it has been decided to provisionally include in this year's Estimate; and how much money it is proposed to grant for each of these farms?

MR. BRYCE: The Department of Agriculture, in the earlier period of its existence, utilized the services of officers of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society for the purpose of giving expert advice and instruction in respect of agriculture, creameries, flax cultivation, egg packing, poultry rearing, fruit growing, and bee keeping; and also in the organisation of agricultural banks. As county schemes developed, and local authorities succeeded in procuring qualified instructors in the subjects mentioned it became unnecessary for the Department to employ the society's officers in this work. In 1905 the society was employed by the Department to organise co-operative credit societies, live stock insurance secieties, and home industries associations, the amount paid for this service being £2,000. The total amount paid to the society up to February 28th last was £18,976. The Department exercised supervision over the work done for it by the society, and the claims for remuneration and expenses were duly vouched and certified. The other forms of organisation to be included this year are the organisation of co-operative flax, agricultural and dairy societies, the estimated cost being £3,700. I have received other details which are too long to embody in a reply to a Question, but which I shall be happy to show the hon. Member if he desires.

MR. DILLON: Can the right hon. Gentleman circulate a printed reply with full particulars?

MR. BRYCE: I dare say that can be done.

Cork County Council and the Fishing Industry.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has seen a copy of a resolution passed unanimously by the Cork County Council in connection with the inquiry into the working of the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Department, suggesting the appointment of a representative Fishery Board as in Scotland, with practical and competent experts as inspectors, and establishing a Government brand for mackerel and herrings; and whether steps will be taken to give effect to the recommendations of this representative public body.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer to the reply which I gave to the similar Question of the hon. Member for North East Cork on Thursday last.† It was to the effect that the resolution referred to had been transmitted to the Committee, as I thought the subject fit for their consideration.

Galway Rate Collectorship.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary the Question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether he has received copies of resolutions and other communications protesting against the action of the Local Government Board in refusing to sanction the action of the Galway County Council in appointing Mr. Michael Hobbs as rate collector; and whether he will say from whom such resolutions and communications were received; and will he state the reasons of the Local Government Board for refusing to sanction the appointment of Mr. Hobbs.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway, S.): At the same time may I ask the right hon. Gentleman if it is a fact that the county council of Galway quite recently elected to the position of rate collector for the district of Killimore, a gentleman named Mr. Michael Hobbs; whether Mr. Hobbs, up till a recent date, was a member of the county council and a magistrate of the county; and having regard to the minute passed by the county council at their meeting on April 26th, wherein they state that "no disqualification attaches to Mr. Hobbs," and asking the Local Government Board to sanction his appointment, whether he will ask the Local Government Board to reconsider their decision, with a view to carrying out the expressed wishes of the Galway County Council.

Mr. BRYCE said he was very willing to answer the Questions. He would answer both together. Continuing, he said: I have received the resolution of the Galway County Council as well as communications from other persons, the majority of whom are in favour of Mr. Hobbs. It is a fact that Mr. Hobbs was recently elected a rate collector and that he was, up to July of last year, a magistrate of the county Galway by reason of his being chairman of a rural district council. It was also a fact that the Galway County Council expressed the view that in their opinion no disqualification attached to Mr. Hobbs. The Local Government Board pointed out that Mr. Hobbs was actually disqualified by a general order made in 1899. The general order imposes certain disqualifications, and by that order Mr. Hobbs was disqualified and by that order the Local Government Board consider they are bound.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the case of Mr. William Lowrey, who was chairman of the Birr District Council, who was prosecuted for a speech delivered in August, 1902, was sentenced to five months hard labour entailing disqualification as chairman of the district council, was about three months after his liberation appointed to the position of clerk of the union which had become vacant, that the appointment was first disallowed by the Local Government Board but was immediately sanctioned by Mr. Wyndham, then Chief Secretary.

Mr. BRYCE: No, Sir. I am not aware of that, but I will make inquiries.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): As I understand, this gentleman was appointed a rate collector, and it is said he was disqualified because he was convicted of taking part in an unlawful assembly. Is there any similar disqualification of this kind in the law of England, and as a matter of fact is not the President of the Local Government Board exactly in the same position, having been convicted of a precisely similar offence?

Mr. BRYCE: I have no information as to the latter part of the Question. I do not think my right hon. friend is under any disqualification as regards the law of England, but I cannot tell, I will make inquiry. I believe there is a disqualification as to members of county councils in Ireland.

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† See col. 738.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: That is not the question.

MR. BRYCE: Let me finish, please. There was a disqualification in this case. Whether there is such disqualification in the law of England I will inquire.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): Where are the equal laws?

MR. DUFFY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Mr. Hobbs was one of a batch of political offenders imprisoned by the late Government during their term of office—whose sentences were remitted shortly after the present Government came into power, thereby showing that the Government did not regard Mr. Hobbs as a terrible criminal?

MR. BRYCE: It is perfectly true that the Lord-Lieutenant released Mr. Hobbs; that does not affect the question of the existence of this disqualification.

MR. DILLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman withdraw it?

MR. SLOAN: Does the right hon. Gentleman know why the Lord-Lieutenant remitted the sentence?

MR. BRYCE: That could not be answered without notice.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I can answer it: because he was convicted by a packed jury.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: May I ask for a reply to the Question put by the hon. Member for East Mayo. Will the Local Government Board, of which the right hon Gentleman is President, withdraw the Order?

MR. BRYCE: The question of this Order will be considered and deserves to be considered. Of course I cannot be expected to answer a Question of that kind at once.

MR. DILLON: I will put down the Question for this day week.

MR. HAZLETON (Galway, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say on whose advice the Local Government Board came to the decision not to sanction this appointment?

MR. BRYCE: This order has been in force since 1899, and therefore they did not require any advice.

Irish Rural Postmen—Jeremiah Cronin's Pay.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that Mr. Jeremiah Cronin, a rural postman at Gneevgullia, county Kerry, is in receipt of only 5s. weekly for services that occupy six hours daily, and that he is supposed to commence delivery at seven o'clock a.m., and be back at the office at 9.30 a.m., though this is practically an impossibility; and whether he will give instructions to walkers or inspectors when inquiring as to the time necessary for delivery of letters to select days on which letters have to be delivered to several houses instead of to a few houses in the district; and whether he will direct that Mr. Cronin's wages be increased to enable him to live in his position.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I have called for a report on the subject; and I will communicate with the hon. Member when I am in possession of the details.

Colonial Marriages Bill.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Prime Minister if he is in a position to state when the Government will be able to introduce the Bill which has been promised for improving the Law regarding certain Colonial marriages.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The Colonial Marriages Bill was introduced in the House of Lords on Monday and I believe it is put down for Second Reading for next Tuesday.

The Estimates.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if there is any intention on the part of the Government to appoint a Select Committee, to be called the Estimates Committee, for the purpose of examining and reporting on one class of the Estimates precedent to the Votes being discussed in Committee of Supply, as recommended by the Select Committee on National Expenditure which reported in July, 1903.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I can only refer my hon. friend to the Answer which I gave to a similar Question last Thursday,[†] to the effect that in my view the subject is a fitting one for the consideration of the Committee on Procedure

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) asked the Prime Minister, with regard to the arrangement for taking the division on the Second Reading of the Education Bill on Thursday, whether, having regard to the special circumstances of the case, the immense number of Members who desired to speak and the relatively small number who had so far taken part in the debate, and the fact that the Bill differed from others of the same kind in being criticised or commented upon from four different quarters, he could see his way to prolong the debate after Thursday.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will not use his influence as Leader of the House to shorten the extraordinary prolixity of speeches on this Bill, in which case we should not want any more time?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I recognise fully the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman has asked the Question, and I recognise still more keenly the advice and the opinion given by the hon. Member whom, in the matter of short speeches, I regard as my leader. No doubt he has hit the blot in the whole of the debate. I am afraid, however, that we cannot extend the time. No one knows better than the right hon. Gentleman that when a certain day has been fixed for a division and that fixture has been corroborated day after day, as this fixture has been, it is almost impossible to change it. I find that for the Bill of 1902, which was certainly a larger Bill, three and a half days were allowed—exactly the same time as for this measure—and that for the Education Bill of 1903 only one and a half days were allowed; so that I do not think anyone can say that the time is insufficient. Whether it has been properly expended is another question, but that is quite beyond my control or that of any individual. I have myself happened to look into the course of the first night's debate, and I find that nine Members addressed the House during seven hours. It is a serious matter to those who have been imperfectly educated to divide seven by nine, but as far as I can think out the matter, and giving to the question all the time at my disposal, it gives from forty-five to fifty minutes as the average length of a speech. I venture to say that it is really absurd; and that is the reason why so many hon. Members on both sides of the House are excluded from participating in the debate, because the hon. Members who have the good fortune to be called upon make such an inordinate use of their opportunities. I do not blame anyone for doing so; but it is undoubtedly the cause—I regret it as much as the right hon. Gentleman—why Members who might well enlighten the House on the subject, are excluded, while others who cannot do so much good service occupy so large a share of Parliamentary time. But I am afraid that we must stand by to-morrow night, because of the great inconvenience that would be caused to everyone concerned if at this time we made any alteration. But we can suspend the eleven o'clock rule if there is any desire for it. Indeed, I am not sure that it is not usual, for convenience and to prevent any interference with the last speech, to suspend that rule formally and innocently. But even if more than that was asked for by the right hon. Gentleman and his followers, I do not think we should have much objection; but I am afraid that we must stand by Thursday night.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that out of the whole of the time available for debate yesterday two of his colleagues occupied more than a fourth and that one of the right hon. Gentleman's colleagues occupied thirty minutes in discussing the financial provisions of the Act of 1902?

[†] See Col. 741.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If we come to bandying words about the length of speeches, I may remind the noble Lord that there was a speech delivered from behind the Front Opposition Bench which occupied an hour and a half last night.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What business do the Government propose to take next week.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Finance Bill will be the business on Monday.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [May 7th], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

> "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): It might be supposed from much of the language used during the debate that this Bill is a wanton disturbance of the peace which has prevailed in the education world, and an attack on the Church of England. There has not been much indication of peace in the education world during the last few years, and I think that this measure will be recognised to be a necessary complement of the Act of 1902. It was impossible for the Government, after all that has been said at the general election, to have done less than to bring in this Bill. It is a logical consequence of the Act of 1902. Nevertheless, I do not think that any resentment which may exist with regard to the Act of 1902 ought to prevent the House from endeavouring to consider fairly and temperately what is the nature of the opposition to the Bill. I am aware that underneath the great noise which has been raised in the country there exists a real alarm with regard to its provisions. But I believe that it exists almost entirely in the minds of the clergy. That is no reason, however, why we should not give it fair consideration and strive, if possible, to disarm that opposition, to show what are the motives which underlie the Bill, and which have induced the Government to believe that it is the only possible settlement of the present controversy. The endowment clauses, for example have excited alarm; but I assure the House that they are not intended in any way to interfere with modern endowments of a distinctly denominational character. It has been supposed that there is some attempt being made of that kind, but I can assure the House that there is nothing of the kind in the minds of the Government The principles of these provisions are principles which have been stated by leading Liberals during the last forty years. When the Bill reaches the Committee stage every desire will be shown on the part of the Government to deal fairly with the question.

The first complaint made against the Bill is that it removes the tests imposed on teachers, or the obligation to secure that the teacher shall belong to a particular denomination. That provision of the Bill is the inevitable result of the introduction of the principle of local option or contro As long as the voluntary schools were under private management it followed that it was easy for them to make their choice on denominational lines and to ask questions with regard to the teacher. Even under the Act of 1902 this might be done, because the denominational majority was secured. But under popular local control, such as the Bill creates, that system became impossible; and, therefore, I submit if there is any logic in the matter this measure is the logical consequence of what was done in 1902 when the late Government established local popular control. By the Act of 1902 the teachers were virtually made a part of the Civil Service, and if that is the case, then the principle that there should be no distinction of creed or denomination, no selection of men according to religious tests, must necessarily apply to teachers also. This fact, however, does not tie the hands of the local authority as to the selection of the men whom they think to be the fittest for the mastership of a school. I regret the loss which these debates now suffer through the absence of Lord Hugh Cecil, who has declared that chaos in the appointment of teachers must follow the operation of this Bill. But there is a country north of the Tweed where popularly elected local authorities have not applied any tests for the last thirty years or more. They have found no difficulty in procuring competent religious teachers, no difficulty in choosing men to give religious instruction with perfect satisfaction to the people of Scotland. I think, therefore, that the suggestion which has been made that this Bill will create a practical difficulty in this respect is completely negatived by the long and satisfactory experience of Scotland.

The Government have also been accused of overriding trusts. Trusts have frequently been overridden, conspicuously by the Acts for reforming the Universities, and the trusts of these very schools have been altered by the Act of 1902. The commonest of these trusts was one for the education of the poor in the principles of the Church of England. How far will that be affected by this Bill? The children of the poor will continue to receive elementary education, and provision is made for enabling them to receive it in accordance with the principles of the Church of England on two days in the week. The schoolhouse will be left in the hands of the trustees for all other purposes of the Church; and the trust is benefited to this extent, that the trustees and subscribers are to be relieved of the whole cost of maintenance. It is said that the wishes of the subscribers will be neglected, but that argument has been very greatly exaggerated. Who are the subscribers? Before 1870 a great deal of the money came out of the public Exchequer; and it is a mistake to suppose that the bulk of the money subscribed since 1870 has come from purely denominational sources. A large part has come from persons who are not members of the Church of England and a large part from persons who desired to avoid school boards and the rates which would follow. A great deal, too, has come from those who have bodies but not souls—corporations like the great railway companies, who cannot have any denominational purpose whatever. It was originally intended in 1870, and for a long time afterwards, that half the cost of these schools should be borne by the subscribers. But of late years the whole cost has been borne by the State. The denominational element, therefore, given by the funds subscribed to the building has been largely diluted or washed out by the large sums which the State has annually contributed. The clergy of the Church of England say that this Bill gives a preference to Nonconformity—as if Nonconformity were a species of religion The Cowper-Temple clause did not create any religion or give any preference to any particular form of creed. It was simply a prohibition to teach a creed or formulary in the schools. That is not Nonconformity, any more than it is Anglicanism or Catholicism. It is a direction to avoid doing anything which brings into force the distinctive tenets of a particular denomination. It is a direction to teach, as far as is possible, that which the Protestant bodies hold in common; and it ought to be called not so much undenominationalism as co denominationalism. What is the religion that is so much complained of as being "Cowper-Temple religion?" It is the Christianity of the first three centuries—the Christianity that existed before any creeds were imposed. The first official creed was formulated in the year 325, before which Christians had not begun to separate themselves into sects. I am often amused to hear the way people talk of that gentle and kindly man, Mr. Cowper-Temple, as if he were some heresiarch, some bold, bad man who wished to destroy Christian peace. He was the very reverse of all these things. What he desired to have taught was that which is held and valued by nineteen-twentieths of the laity of the Church of England. Is there no such thing as what is called "our common Christianity?" It is a phrase sometimes heard in the pulpit, and often on occasions when people of different denominations meet together for objects of social welfare. It is recognised in every case except where the children are concerned, and yet it is for the children, above all, that this common Christianity ought to exist. I am not referring to the Roman Catholics.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): We began in 325.

Mr. BRYCE: No, you were there from the first, and so were we all. There are sentences in an utterance of the Archbishop of Canterbury which will bear repetition—

> "It is almost inconceivable that any Christian man who knows the facts can speak of the Christian teaching given in the London school board as worthless because it is undenominational. Such instruction lays the foundation on which the ampler teaching of the Christian faith can be securely built."

Canon Maurice and the late Archbishop Temple also spoke with approval of such undenominational teaching. We have had this undenominational system in force since 1870 for half the children in the country. Are the children who have grown up in the Cowper-Temple schools any less religious than those in the voluntary schools? The inspectors admit that they are better trained in Scripture knowledge. Will any one say that those children are less honest, upright, and temperate, or less willing to serve their fellow-men than the children in the voluntary schools? There have been a great many extraordinary statements made, but no one can say that the results of the board school teaching have been unsatisfactory or inferior to those of the voluntary schools. It is said by some that Bible Protestantism is not Christianity at all. Such persons approximate more to the Catholic Church than to the Church of England. The essential points are the existence of the priesthood and the sacrament, to which they attach a higher and deeper value than other Christians do. If that doctrine is held by the great majority, I admit that their feelings may be those which are held by Catholics. I do not deny that the case of the Catholics is different, that they have a special case, and I earnestly hope both sides of the House will endeavour as far as possible to give consideration to their case. But I will go so far as to say that this view is not the official view of the Church of England as defined in the thirty-nine Articles. For whose benefit is this Bill, as all and other Education Acts have been, to be passed? For the benefit of the children, not for the clergy or for politicians. Can a child of twelve benefit by receiving those distinctive formulæ of Christian doctrine which are excluded by the Cowper-Temple clause? [OPPOSITION cries of "Yes, certainly."] I have had experience of the Catechism, and I remember being asked such questions as "What is effectual calling?" There are many hon. Members who have learned that the sacrament "is the outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace." Are these metaphysical and theological definitions comprehensible by the simple mind of a child? The only form of Christian teaching that can properly be given to a child is in those few fundamental truths in regard to which Christians are agreed. Those fundamental truths are the goodness and greatness of the Creator, the duty to love Him and keep His Commandments, and the sacred precepts of the New Testament, especially those precepts delivered by Christ Himself—precepts delivered and expressed in language so simple and beautiful that it touches the imagination and emotions of a child and goes home to his heart. All this can be taught, and is being taught, efficiently and usefully in the board schools of the country. There are many great difficulties with regard to the teaching of theology to a child; but I almost thought while listening to the hon. Member for Cambridge University that no mother could be fitted to give simple Bible teaching to a child at her knee unless she had passed through a course of training at a theological college, so high is the standard that the hon. Member thinks is necessary for those who impart theological fundamental truths to a child. When the Act of 1870 was passed it was said that each teacher would try to instil that particular form of doctrine which commended itself to his own conscience. That has happened in the rarest cases. The testimony of every one who knows the working of the board schools for thirty-five years is that these schools have given simple Bible teaching which has caused no offence and has been very beneficial. That, I believe, is the opinion of the parents of the children. There are hon. Members who send their children to Eton or Harrow, where they certainly used to receive very little definite dogmatic religious instruction. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"] I can speak for my own contemporaries at the University, who tell me of the instruction they have received. Things may be different today. But I appeal to those hon. Members who come from the classes whose children use the elementary schools to say whether they believe the working classes desire to have this distinctive sectarian instruction in the schools.

EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.) asked whether these hon. Members were in favour of religious instruction.

MR. BRYCE: There is a difference of opinion. There are some who prefer a secular system, but I believe the larger number of them would prefer what is called the Cowper-Temple system. I think even those who believe that a secular system is the best and ultimate solution of this question will bear testimony to the fact that the parents are well satisfied with the present board school teaching. I should be deeply grieved to lose from the schools of the country what I believe to be a powerful and valuable agency in modelling the characters of the children. One chief reason why we desire that this Bill should pass is because we believe that practically the only alternative is a secular system. I admit that a secular system is more logical, and that the Cowper-Temple system is not logical; but under a secular system hundreds and thousands of children would get no knowledge of the Bible at all. [OPPOSITION cries of "Why?"] Because they do not go to Sunday school. Their parents ought to teach them, but in many cases they do not do so, and in existing conditions if they are not given it in the schools, they will not get it at all. I ask the House to remember how immeasurable the loss would be to children, even of non-Christian parents, if they knew nothing of Scripture history and Scripture literature. They would have no opportunity of being carried back to that far-distant world so unlike our own, and would know nothing of what has formed the basis of thought and poetry for the whole modern world and has been the central force of European history. I admit that the problem is one of extreme difficulty, and I do not say this solution or any other solution is one which can be considered perfectly satisfactory. It is a difficulty which has vexed Europe, our Colonies, and the United States. Broadly speaking, there are two ways in which attempts has been made to solve it. The German system recognises two religions and provides schools for each denomination. But Germany has two established Churches, the Catholic Church and the Lutheran, or Evangelical, Church, and both are controlled by the State to a far greater extent than would be tolerated in this country. Those two conditions do not exist and are not likely to exist in this country. The other solution is that adopted, with few exceptions, by the British Colonies and by the United States. It is a system which is either entirely secular, excluding religion altogether from the schools, or else confines religious instruction to simple Bible reading. It is the general testimony of those who have spoken in this House that the people of this country do not desire secular education. Here are two alternatives; but we could not follow the German example or the example of the United States. Consequently there is only the other method left which has been adopted in this country. I think the noble Lord the Member for Chorley said last night that there was no danger of secularism in this country at the present moment. There may be no danger at present because the people of this country desire to maintain religion in the schools. But it is conceivable that we might come to secularism, and therefore I appeal to hon. Members to pass this Bill in order to prevent that occurrence. We are trying by this Bill to give facilities which we believe will fairly meet such obstacles as exist. We will go into Committee on the Bill with an open mind, and perfectly prepared to consider such changes as may be proposed, with some conformity, of course, to the general principles laid down. I maintain that the Bill as regards, at any rate, the members of the Church of England imposes no burden; it relieves them of an existing pecuniary burden; it offers fair terms to the denominational schools, and makes practically no difference to distinctive denominational teaching, except that it is to be given, not by the regular teacher, but by others who come in. It is to be given on two days a week, and that is as much as is given now.

*MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): Will the right hon. Gentleman forgive me? Under the Bill, it may be given (if the local authority allow) on not more than two days a week.

MR. BRYCE: I think if the local authority and the local managers so desire it, in the future it may be given on any day. We believe that the local authorities will do it under this Bill. I will tell you why. We believe that the local authorities are in harmony with the religious spirit of the English people. We believe that the local authorities are prepared to carry out what they believe to be the wishes of the English people, and we believe that these bodies are not animated by those sentiments of bigotry against any particular creed which are often attributed to them. Let me give an instance. There is not in this country a more Protestant city than Liverpool—it is ultra-Protestant. The local authority in Liverpool has been liberal in making grants for instruction to Roman Catholic institutions, and has made no difference between Catholic institutions and others. That I believe to be the general spirit which animates our local authorities throughout England, and it is the spirit which animates local authorities in Scotland, where there has been no attempt to abuse the power to the prejudice of any religious party. This Bill, as it makes no difference in distinctive teaching, gives to all children as much as their minds are fitted to receive. What is it an Education Bill ought to do? It ought to secure symmetry and co-ordination with elasticity and efficiency. It ought to make the teaching profession an open profession—every post in it equally accessible and open to every man and woman who desires to enter it. It ought to place religious bodies upon an equal footing, and, in particular, to give all the children equal treatment. It surely ought to try to bring up so far as possible in the same schools those children who are afterwards to live together as citizens. This Bill may require some amendment. As I have said we are prepared to consider in a reasonable spirit any amendment. The Bill is an honest effort to accomplish the objects I have stated; to get rid of theological controversy by applying equality; to minimise those ecclesiastical disputes by which our energies have been divided and wasted, while the interests of the children have been forgotten; and to satisfy that desire to retain the religious character of the schools which animates the great majority of the English people.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Of all the speeches delivered in the course of this debate I confess that the one which perhaps interested me more than any other was that of the hon. Member for Leicester, and that for two reasons—first of all, because for the first time I heard a representative in this House put forward a plea in powerful language for secular education in this country, and, secondly, because the hon. Member for Leicester represents a Party which has come freshest from the constituencies. I confess that the speeches and the opinions of the Labour Members on both sides of the House are more interesting to me in this debate than the speeches of those whom I may describe without offence as old stagers in this controversy. One of the arguments used in the powerful speech of the hon. Member for Leicester struck me particularly, and is, I think, full of ominous meaning for hon. Members on both sides of the House. He used these words—

> "It was a curious fact that every Labour movement was in favour of a system of secular education in public schools. The chief reason was because those who belonged to Labour parties sent their children to these schools. What proportion of the Bishops or of the Members of that House sent their children to these schools."

Well, there is a great deal in this argument. I think hon. Members like the right. hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade and the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, who value the maintenance of some form of religious training in the schools, will do well to take to heart and give good weight to the fact that the Labour Members who have come in recently, and who have more than any other Members the right to speak for parents, are all now in favour of a secular system. [Cries of "No."] I am referring now to the only prominent member of the Labour Party who has spoken.

MR. LLEWELLYN WILLIAMS (Carmarthen District): The President of the Board of Trade sends his children to these schools.

MR. DILLON: That is a very interesting fact, but the right hon. Gentleman would hardly describe himself as a

Labour Member. I was directing attention to what was stated by the hon. Member for Leicester. While that may be true as regards the general body—the non-Catholic, the non-Jewish working people of this country—if the decision of this matter were left to those whose children use the schools it would be rather in favour either of simple Bible teaching, or, I think by a majority, in favour of a secular system. [Cries of "No."] Well, I may be wrong, but if that test be applied to those for whom we as Roman Catholics speak how would the decision go? In regard to the Catholics of the working classes of this country whose children use these schools, there can be no manner of doubt about their view of the matter, and I tell the hon. Member for Leicester that if the members of the Labour Party had been at the Albert Hall the other day, or if they were as well acquainted as many of us are with the sacrifices made week in and week out for years by the poorest Roman Catholics of the working classes of this country to maintain their schools, they would know by the best of all possible tests that they at least desired the maintenance of the Catholic character of these schools. There was just one other point in the speech of the hon. Member for Leicester which struck me as of great significance. We have heard a great deal in these debates on the question of the right of the parent. The hon. Member for Leicester put forward an amazing doctrine. He said he was not a believer in the right of the parents to teach their children the religion which they desired them to receive; on the contrary, he said that in his opinion the children had a right to appeal against the parents impressing upon them their religious creeds or views. Some of us asked at what age. I would say to the hon. Member for Leicester that when he gives expression to such principles as these, he is tilting against a very ancient principle of humanity which is too strong for him. It is nearly 2,500 years since the philosopher Plato laid down the principle in his *Republic* that every child within a few weeks of birth should be taken from its father and mother. More than 2,000 years have elapsed since then, and even with that great authority that doctrine has not made much progress. No, Sir, in my opinion the claim of the parents for reasonable State aid is a claim that no Government and no majority has a right to trample upon.

Before I pass away from the views of the Labour Party, let me draw attention to one aspect of this case, and I do it with all earnestness and all sincerity. I would ask them to remember how many noble causes have been ruined by the fires of religious controversy. I would ask them to consider in dealing with this Bill in its future stages that the apostles of reaction are seeking to cast into the ranks of the Labour Party in England the apple of discord, and whether the great movement of progress so happily inaugurated at the last election, if drawn into irreconcilable hostility towards this Bill in its final stages, may not receive a fatal set back. It may be said and it has been said that we are wrong in alleging that this Bill if not altered would amount to religious persecution against the Catholics of this country, but I ask all who hold that view whether, when there is a question of religious persecution or suffering from conscience sake, it is not a fact that the only people who have a right to decide that matter are the people who allege they suffer? Those who persecuted in the past from the religious point of view, and it will be so in the future, will never admit that any wrong is done, and it is only those who suffer that really complain.

I should like to say a word about another subject. A remarkable and most interesting maiden speech was made by the hon. Member for Bath. He appealed very directly to the Irish Members, and asked us to say what has the election decided. I thought the election decided in favour of free trade, and we in this House decided by an overwhelming majority that that was the governing element at the election. I thought also the election had decided against Chinese labour, and while I frankly admit that the majority was a good deal due to and increased by the injustice unhappily done by the Bill of 1902, I would ask the hon. Member to go to the Liberal Members for Liverpool, for Manchester, for Bolton, and ask them about the pledges they gave their Catholic electors who voted for them, and to say frankly whether it was part of their wish to destroy the Catholic schools. We Irishmen who speak for the Roman Catholics deny that as regards the great industrial centres, the decision of the election was that the Catholic schools were to be taken from us or destroyed. On the contrary, we assert, and can prove, that in almost all the centres of industrial population, pledges were given by Liberal candidates that they would see that no injustice was done to the Catholic schools. The hon. Member for Bath made an appeal to us on the Home Rule ground, and said to the Irish Members, "Trust the English people." Well, I want to trust them here in the House of Commons. Let the hon. Member for Bath give us proof here, in the House of Commons, that the English people may be trusted not to act unjustly or in a spirit of bigotry in this matter; let it be settled here where we have Catholic representatives, and not in local municipalities where the voice of the Catholics cannot be heard. Let the Parliament of England settle it. Surely this is a great issue which the Parliament of England ought to decide. What is to be gained by throwing this apple of discord into every local municipality? It is idle for the hon. Member for Bath to say that no local body would act cruelly or unjustly. I do not wish to inflame feeling by going into particular instances, but when we have already on record a warning given by some local bodies that they will use the opportunity given under this Bill, in its present shape, to wipe out the Catholic schools—then, I say, let us settle the matter here in Parliament and secure that this subject will not be made a bone of contention at every municipal election, and thereby mar the progress of public interest in all other local affairs throughout the country.

Let me say a word in regard to a matter which has come before the country everywhere. It is a question which divides our case by an impassible gulf from the case of the Church of England—and that is the Cowper-Temple clause. I do not think that anything is to be gained in this controversy by using abusive language. This debate has been hitherto characterised by good temper and temperance of statement. But it is not true to state that the teaching in the board schools under the Cowper-Temple clause is a new religion. It is not tyranny. It is simply, as we all admit, what has come to be known in England as Bible instruction; and it is idle to deny that a large section of the Church of England approved of it.

AN HON. MEMBER: As a foundation.

MR. DILLON: Exactly; that is what I am talking about. You may accept it as a foundation. Practically speaking, the Church of England, to a large extent, accepts Bible teaching, and it has not been denied that in most of the counties of England the leading ecclesiastics have taken part in drawing up the syllabuses. Hon. Members here, and members of the Church of England outside, say that largely and in the main they accept it as a good foundation. That is the difference between us and the Church of England. The Church of England at its worst or at its lowest says that the doctrine of the Cowper-Temple clause is a good foundation; but to us it is hostile. We object to it; and I warn hon. Members that if we Catholics are forced to the choice between a purely secular system of education and a purely Bible reading system, we will unhesitatingly accept the purely secular; and if that goes on, as sure as the sun will rise to-morrow morning, we shall have in this country very soon a purely secular system of education. It is quite true that at present the majority of the people of England would not like to see the Bible out of the schools, and it is equally true that there is a party growing up who would say "whatever our own desires may be, rather than see this eternal quarrel we would accept the secular system," and if you force us to choose we will take the secular system in preference to simple Bible teaching. Now you understand what it is that divides us. That is the opinion of all my colleagues. Therefore the simple Bible teaching in the schools is to us Catholics worse than no religion. Yes, it is hostile to our system, and what you are doing is this—if you persist in carrying out this Bill unamended and thereby destroy our schools and drive us to war against this Bill—and it would be a prolonged war—the result will inevitably be, in my opinion, after some years of quarrelling and struggle and perhaps another swing of the pendulum, in which the Liberals would be the under dog and the present Opposition the upper, the institution of a secular system in England. The President of the Board of Trade, in his most powerful and eloquent speech, although I disagreed with most of what he said, used these words—

> "Here is one thing on which we are all agreed. We agree that it is the business of the State to train and discipline the conscience."

That is a very remarkable statement coming from the President of the Board of Trade. I was rather surprised at that definition—

> "And I think there is agreement between us that this must be done on the principle of Christian morality."

But what about the Jews? Is that the business of the State? Mark the words—

> "The duty of the State, we are all agreed we must train the consciences on the basis of morality."

I think the right hon. Gentleman is out in his logic there, and if he thinks he can apply to us any more than the Jews his notion of the proper way to train our consciences, which he declares to be the business of the State—to train the consciences of our children in the principles of Christian morality—I warn him he is just as much at sea as in the case of the Jews. I have said before, and I repeat it, that so far as we Catholics are concerned, it is not the teaching of the catechism that is the most important thing to us in our schools. The Chief Secretary for Ireland has pointed out in his speech how impossible it is for little children to understand the catechism. We differ entirely from his view. We think the proper teaching is dogma and specific truth. But that is not the point. What we are struggling and making sacrifices for in these schools is the creation of a Catholic atmosphere, and teaching the child from his earliest years that he is a member of a great Church. I know that idea is quite foreign to hon. Members opposite, but so far as I personally am concerned, I attach more importance to have surrounding the child that Catholic atmosphere than I do to the teaching of the catechism, and therefore it is that we are so strongly opposed to any kind of teaching which would allow the teaching of the Church or the Church itself to be ridiculed or belittled in the mind of the child during its school life. Then later on the President of the Board of Trade used this extraordinary language. He said—

> "We have a new doctrine about religious instruction, the doctrine of the right of the parent."

That is a perfectly new doctrine, so far as the general controversy is concerned. Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to remind him of the language he used in 1902? On July 30th, 1902, he said—

> "Why should a parent not be allowed to dictate to the teachers what doctrine he wished his children to be taught?"

Mark you, not to teach any doctrine, but to dictate what doctrine he wished his child to be taught.

> "There were three millions of children in the denominational schools and over two millions of these were in the 8,000 parishes with only one school. What right had the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich to speak on behalf of the parents of these millions of children and say, 'This is the particular doctrine these parents want to be taught?' Why would he not allow the parents of these children to say, 'This is the doctrine we want taught to our children?'"

So that the right of the parent to dictate as to doctrine is not new to the President of the Board of Trade. When I was advocating the right of the parent in England, the chief support I got was from the Radical Party, every man of which came into the lobby with me and voted in favour of the right of the parent to have a substantial voice in the appointment of the teachers. I was denounced in the most unmeasured terms as a traitor to the denominational schools by the then Leader of the Opposition, because he said I was sacrificing the denominational schools. I would like to know would the then Government, if they knew as much as now, have accepted it. They denounced me as a traitor when I got the Radical Party to vote for my Amendment. If they had surrendered and made that concession, then they would have secured the control of their schools for the next twenty-five or thirty years. Let me say a word as to the right of the parents. I think there has been in relation to it gross exaggeration. I have read in the newspapers harangues in which it was declared that the parents had an unlimited right to dictate on this subject. Let me remind hon. Members that there are parents who are anti-Christian. I was reading the other day a well-known book in which the doctrine is advanced that the greatest misfortune which could befall was the teaching of Christianity—and that until it was rooted out, humanity would never come into its true inheritance. Well, the advocates of this view would have as good a right as any one else to dictate to anyone else. Then what about the Anarchist? Would he be entitled to insist upon instruction in the theory and construction of bombs? Of course that is not a numerous class of the community—but there are a good many more of them than we know, probably. The right of the parent we must deal with as sensible men. It must be limited by convenience and a sense of the rights of others. We cannot claim that where there are two or three Catholic families they should have schools set up for themselves. We must be guided by convenience, and we only claim that the right of the parent is one which should be recognised by the Government, and that it should be the object of the Government not to interfere with it so far as the circumstances permit. That is all we claim. Let me, with a couple of sentences, say what it is that we want. I must ask to be dissociated from the language used here last night by the hon. Member for Chorley. He spoke as the champion of the denominational schools, and when he elicited from the Minister for Education an important declaration that it is his purpose to secure denominational teachers in these denominational schools, he made use of it in a manner which showed that his object was not to save the schools for the purpose for which they were intended, but to utilise the statement for the purposes of his own Party. The Minister for Education, in his recent speeches, has made observations from which I think that, from our point of view, peace may be secured. I will, for the purpose of clearness, read some notes I have made of what I think will settle this controversy. First of all, I think that Clause 4 should be made a reality, applying to all the Catholic schools, so far as that can justly be done. I put in the word justly, because I for one will never be a party to demanding a Catholic school where there is a majority of other denominational sections. I daresay I shall incur animosity by stating that that is the first demand we make. Secondly, I think there should be some machinery which will secure us from the danger and apprehension of having teachers forced upon our schools of such a character as would make Clause 4 a nullity and a farce. Those are the words of the Minister for Education himself. I am perfectly confident that the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues never meant that clause to be a nullity and a farce. If they did, why did they introduce it? I am bound to say I will be no party to the attacks which have been made upon the right hon. Gentleman in regard to that clause. I believe that it is his intention to make it a reality, and I do not join with those who abuse him and charge him with ill faith. The third demand is that some provision should be made for future Catholic schools in new centres of Catholic population. That is merely the inevitable corollary and consequence of the previous demands. I say nothing at all about the question of the endowments, because that is a highly technical question, and I understand from the Government that they are prepared to consider any proposal which is brought up. These three demands are not very extravagant; they will not interfere with the general scope of the Bill or its principle, and they are consistent with the principles already accepted by the Radical Party. I make bold to say that if they were conceded and the necessary Amendments, five or six in number, embodied, it would enable us or at least it would enable me to accept the Bill and to appeal to our friends in this country to do likewise.

And now, let me make a strong appeal to the Labour and the Radical Parties. I appeal first of all to the Nonconformists of this country. I personally have never taken part in some of the taunts which have been frequently levelled against the Nonconformist conscience. I can never forget that with them we fought shoulder to shoulder against religious tests and for other forms of liberty in this country. But so far as the religious test is in this Bill I will not vote against it. I will never vote for the abolition of religious tests in regard to education, and I will fight against the appointment as teacher to a homogeneous Catholic school of some man who will turn Clause 4 into a farce. [AN HON. MEMBER: But that is a test.] The hon. Member does not know what a religious test means the sense in which I use it, and I say that a man who calls that a test merely puts difficulties in our way. I appeal to the Nonconformists on this ground, that when in 1902, after long debate, it was made manifest to this House what was the chief grievance of which they complained, I myself stood up and on behalf of the Irish Party moved the Amendment, in regard to which the President of the Board of Trade told the House that although it would not be absolutely satisfactory to them it would remove the greater part of their grievance. At that time I was denounced as a traitor by the *Tablet* newspaper and by many of the leading members of the Catholic Church in this country. I ask the Nonconformists now to be reasonable and to reciprocate and meet me half way. I will ask them to do nothing in this matter which is unjust to them or which will inflict injustice upon them. I entered upon that occasion into the region of prophecy, a dangerous *rôle* for a politician to take. I prophesied to those who resisted the Amendment that there would be a mighty reaction and that they would suffer. I prophesy to the Nonconformists now that that motto and example of 1902, *vae victis*, or any measure inflicting injustice will have a similar reaction. I appeal finally to the Labour Party to help us in Committee. I appeal to them because we, the Irish Catholics of this country, threw all our weight to help them to create a Labour Party. They have a long road to travel, with many difficulties, and if at the outset of that road, which I hope will be a glorious one, Labour is thrown back into the arms of reaction, and the floodgates of religious bitterness are opened, I warn the Labour Party that it will be a dangerous course to follow. Let us approach this Bill in a spirit of conciliation, and from that point of view I confidently prophesy that it will be easy, at least as far as we Irish Members are concerned, to find a way out of the difficulty. All that we ask for is that our schools should be secured, and for liberty to build new schools for our people as centres of population spring up. I will not, and I cannot, believe that it is the purpose of this Government to take from us the schools which, whatever can be said of any other section of the population, have undoubtedly been reared by the sweat and the labour of the toiling millions of our population.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): Everybody who has listened to the speech which has just been delivered will agree with me as to its importance and interest, derived not merely from the ability and eloquence of the speaker, but also from the position which he occupies as a representative man with reference to this question. We recognise that his position on this occasion might have been embarrassing to a less practised debater. He desires on other grounds, not here in question, to give a general support to the Government. He is opposed—conscientiously opposed—to this Bill. He has, therefore, at the same time to criticise the Opposition, to support the Government, and to destroy the Bill. The hon. Gentleman has put before us the views which, he has explained, represent the present position and the present desires of the Irish Catholic Party. It is very difficult to gauge the full meaning of so important a declaration when it is first brought before the House in this way in the course of a speech, but I think I am not wrong in saying that the amendments which he asks for from the Government are, first, that Clause 4 should be made a reality. I do not know whether he goes quite as far as we do, but if he does, if he is willing to agree with us on that, he must go with us to the extent of saying that Clause 4, as it stands, is a sham and he wishes to make it a reality. He wishes that the Government shall accept amendments which will prevent the intrusion of teachers of any other denomination into Catholic schools; in other words, he wishes, as all of us must expect he would, that the Catholic atmosphere of the Catholic schools shall be considered sacred and be continuously preserved. He asks not merely that the position of Catholic schools as it is at present shall be continued, but that facilities shall be given, that full liberty shall be given, to the creed for the creation of new schools on the same principle; and, lastly, he suggests that amendments shall be made in the clause dealing with endowments, although he does not specify what they are. He said, in his eloquent peroration, that these demands were made in a spirit of conciliation, and that they were in his opinion very moderate demands. I am not certain whether I differ from him, but these conciliatory and moderate demands destroy the two principles of the Bill. They absolutely destroy the principle of public control over all elementary schools, and they absolutely destroy the principle on which the Government have hitherto insisted —the abolition of what they call tests for teachers. I agree with the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down that this talk about tests for teachers is a misapplication of words. This is a matter which is on totally different lines from those tests which we, all of us—at any rate, those of us who profess Liberal and progressive ideas on whichever side of the House we sit—have always opposed, and which our ancestors in their time opposed. It may be right to carry the matter further. All I wish to say is that I agree with the hon. Member if he meant to impress on the House that they are not *in pari materia* with what are called tests for teachers.

Now, Sir, let us consider the moderate and conciliatory demands of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, speaking alone, as he is entitled to speak, and as necessarily he wishes to speak, for the Irish Catholic Party. So far as they are concerned they will be reconciled by the acceptance of these moderate amendments. But does the House think that it is reasonable to ask us to be satisfied with a concession which is made to only one of the sections which object to the Bill? I am not by any means certain—I have no right to speak for others, but I am inclined to think that if these moderate and conciliatory conditions which are asked for on behalf of the Irish Catholics are granted and extended, as they must be, to every other denomination—if they are extended, as they must be, to the Anglicans, to all those members of Noncomformist bodies who do not accept the views of the Free Churches, and to the Jews, I am not certain, but at first sight I am inclined to believe, you will settle the whole question. The hon. Member stated the views which are held by a definite section of the House, and he expressed what I may call some indifference for those whom he called old stagers, among whom, I am sure, he will admit himself to be a distinguished member. I also claim that I am a very old stager in this education business. More than thirty years ago I was chairman of the National Education Board. At the same time I was a member of several Noncomformist committees. A short time afterwards I was chairman for three years of the Birmingham School Board, so that I have had theoretical and practical experience upon this question; and in all those capacities it is my pride and my delightful recollection that I was associated throughout with my friend the late Dr. Dale. There must be some here who also enjoyed his friendship. No man, as I think, ever held a higher place as a representative of the Free Churches, and it will be admitted by all that he had most sincere religious convictions. His whole spirit was one of devotion and piety; and at the same time there was not a man who had a broader mind or who attached more importance to absolute justice and equality in dealing with all classes of men—those from whom he differed as well as those amongst whom he worked and lived. Thirty years ago almost to a month, when I entered this House, I made my maiden speech, and it was upon this subject; and very curious it is to look back and see that the position was exactly the same then as it is now, and that we have not proceeded one step towards a final settlement. The bone of contention is the same; and I say that, until you come to some definite conclusion as to the principles to be adopted in order to do justice to all, you never will approach anything in the nature of a solution of this problem. Looking at this speech—it was a short one and, I think, imperfectly reported—I find I made two statements. I said that if the priest and the parson, and of course by that I did not mean to speak of particular denominations, but meant that if all clerical and ecclesiastical influence were withdrawn, there would be no religious difficulty. That was my view then, but I am not certain, when we come to examine it, that that statement has helped us or will help us much. My second statement was that the true principles of justice must be observed, and that the principles of the three Nonconformist Committees and of the Birmingham School Board which I represented—and which were the principles, remember, of Nonconformists as able and as distinguished as Dr. Dale and Mr. Henry Richards—that those principles, which involved no sectarian instruction—that is a different thing altogether—but an entire separation between the work of the State and the work of the individual or denomination, offered then, as they seem to me to offer now, the only foundation on which to establish a fair and impartial system. Now, what has struck me in this debate is its essential unreality. We are arguing each from our own side, in opposite directions, but in parallel lines which never meet. I can afford to admit a very great deal of what was said this evening by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, for instance, and it would not in the slightest degree be relevant to the objections I take to this Bill. Each side has put forward its own views and argues that its own views are absolutely reasonable, that they are not unjust and do not interfere unjustly with anybody's conscience, and that there is no desire to interfere unjustly with anybody's conscience. They argue in, I will say, a reasonable and absolutely correct manner, and it would be absolutely satisfactory if we were dealing with a purely secular subject. But, as the hon. Member who has just sat down has well pointed out, when you come to matters of conscience, you cannot dispose of them by reasonable arguments. If you prove to the satisfaction of the whole House, instead of to the satisfaction of only your own side, that the system you are imposing generally under this Bill is absolutely reasonable, after all, you will have to show to the House upon what principle you intend to impose it compulsorily on someone who does not accept it. You may try and convert your opponent and to show him that he is wrong, but when you come to these matters of conscience, at the end of the discussion he tells you you have not converted him. Then you have to see how, consistently with your own principles of justice and religious liberty, you can impose your Bill on him. I would like to give some examples. I will take them from two Bills, the Bill of 1902 and the Bill now before us. The Bill of 1902, as we all know, and as many of our friends on this side of the House have found to their disadvantage during the last election, raised passionate opposition. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton said it had resulted in a mandate, and he defined the mandate. I do not agree with his definition. If there was any mandate at all I do not think it was in the form in which the right hon. Gentleman believes it was. I cannot help recalling what the hon. Member for East Mayo said just now, when he pointed out how many mandates are supposed to have been given at the general election; there is nothing that anybody who was successful attaches importance to which he does not designate by the sacred name of a popular mandate. Let us grant it. I have always maintained that there were a great number of mandates, almost an infinite number, as many mandates as there are Members of the House. Do not let us hear any more of there having been a conclusive popular decision upon any one particular subject. But I complained of the definition of the Member for Wolverhampton. I should have said it was not a mandate from the country about education at all. So far as it was a mandate, it was a mandate from the majority of the Dissenters that Parliament should relieve them of what they felt to be a burning grievance. They did not prescribe the method; they honestly believed they had a grievance, and they asked that it should be removed. Could not we, could not the supporters of the Act of 1902 at any rate, make a perfectly good argument to show that their claim was an extremely unreasonable one? Let us take two points. What was the grievance of the Nonconformist? That he was compelled to pay rates for religious instruction of which he disapproved. Yes, but he paid taxes for I do not know how many years. Logically he ought not to have objected to the imposition of a rate. That might justify the promoters of the Act in thinking that no grievance would arise; but the grievance did arise, and our answer did not convert any single Dissenter that I am aware of. We had a much more serious argument than that. The promoters of the Bill might have said "You complain of grievance in that you are made to pay taxes and rates for an opinion of which you disapprove. On the other hand, you are compelling a great number of others—Catholics, Anglicans, and Jews—to pay rates and taxes for opinions of which they do not approve." If you talk about fairness, about equality as regards different sects, there was a scheme in that Bill of 1902 of what may be called concurrent endowment. If, on the one hand, the Anglicans had their schools, the Catholics theirs, the Jews theirs, for which the Nonconformists were called upon to pay, so the Nonconformists had the Board Schools, at which the religious education given satisfied them, and was paid for by the people who did not approve of that form of religion. I say that that was a very good argument, just as good as any we have heard to-night in favour of this Bill; but from the point of view of the House of Commons we must bear in mind that it did not convert the Dissenters. I have never made any concealment of my personal view that, although I think the Dissenters very much exaggerated their grievance, they had a grievance when the Act came into operation. At any rate, for my purpose it is sufficient to say that they thought they had a grievance, and in those circumstances it was the duty of any Government, whether the present Government or our Government if we had been fortunate at the general election, to endeavour as statesmen and on political grounds to remove the grievance, if possible. We are agreed. Indeed I am striving not to argue this matter in an unnecessarily controversial manner. I say the Government have attempted to remove that grievance. They were called upon to make the attempt. I do not complain of the attempt—I complain of the way in which they have made it. They have attempted to remove the heavy burden the Nonconformist felt upon his shoulders by putting it on the Catholic or Anglican. I defy them to say that that is their mandate. I defy them to show that the great bulk of the Nonconformists desire not merely the removal of their own grievance, but that it should be placed on the shoulders of somebody else. So much for the Act of 1902. Both side shad a good case. What remained at the end of the discussion was that there was a considerable number of people who thought they had a conscientious grievance. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, following the right hon. Gentleman for Wolverhampton, gave us an admirable description, a most impassioned panegyric of the system at present adopted in a board school. He spoke in a way which I think commanded the assent of the majority of the House. Let me incidentally, by the way, correct myself. The Member for Wolverhampton, I think, complained of some words I let fall incidentally. I had spoken of the present Bill as the endowment of a new religion. I withdraw that description. It is inaccurate. What I meant, what I do say, is that it is a new endowment of a special form of religion which is already largely endowed. The million a year which is now to be taken from the pockets of the taxpayers is a further endowment in addition to what is already given to the support of this board school teaching, which is so praised—so rightly and justly praised—by the two right hon. Gentlemen to whom I have referred.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): That is paid to denominational schools in rent and repairs. There is no endowment of anybody.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Pardon me. Surely the right hon. Gentleman does not deny that if he did not propose to deal with the denominational schools, it would not be necessary to find this million, and that the object is to change the religious teaching now given in a denominational school to the teaching now given in a board school? There is no other object in the Bill—no substantial object. I have no personal complaint to make against this board school religion. I have seen the syllabus of the Birmingham Board to which the Member for Wolverhampton referred; I approve of it. But I can go a great deal further. There has not been, to my knowledge, in all the board schools of Birmingham, a complaint from any parent sending his child to those schools of the religious instruction which has been given. Does it never strike the right hon. Gentleman that that argument tells on the other side? How many children of Nonconformists are there who go to Church schools, how many Protestants who go to Roman Catholic schools? Clearly there is a considerable number. What is very much rarer, but that also exists—how many Roman Catholics go to Protestant schools? I might take other denominations. How many complaints can you establish from the parents in any one of those cases? If you assert that the parents would be satisfied with the board school religion in any case, because they have not hitherto complained, on the same ground you may say the parents would be satisfied with the Church of England Catechism because they have not complained. There is no general or substantial complaint on the part of the parents in any of these cases. It seems to me that that justifies the statement which I made, and which I quoted from my maiden speech, in which I said that if the sects would stand aside there would be no religious difficulty. But that does not help the Government; the sects will not stand aside. Neither the Nonconformists, nor the Catholics, nor the Church of England are prepared to accept that position of entire neutrality, and accordingly we have the religious difficulty always with us. Now, I say, what is the use of all your argument, of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen? I am not denying its force; I am not saying I do not agree with it; it may be most unreasonable for the Member for East Mayo to refuse to accept as thoroughly satisfactory the education given in the London Board Schools; it is open to the right hon. Gentleman to think the Church of England are excessively unreasonable in rejecting the school board religion as not being satisfactory to them, and in not voluntarily introducing it into their schools. All I point out is that the right hon. Gentleman has not converted them, that they remain unconvinced, and that just as firmly and sincerely as any Nonconformist believes that his conscience was injured by the Act of 1902, the Anglican believes his conscience will be injured by the Bill of 1906. ["No."] An Hon. Gentleman opposite says "No." That is the old doctrine of intolerance, of which I am sure the hon. Gentleman opposite would make a most admirable representative: that the conscience of any man is only known to those who are prepared to persecute him, that it is for somebody else to declare either what his conscience is or what it ought to be. No reasonable man on the other side will, I think, doubt that it is true to say that in these matters of conscience there is only one judge, and that that is not the man who makes the law, but the man who suffers from the law. However admirable or reasonable the argument you use, there remains the fact that there are a large number of people who would regard the system you desire to establish as a system of religious persecution. I say that the mandate given was a mandate to relieve a grievance, and not to impose one. And there is a difference between a Bill which, I believe, would have been unanimously supported in this House, and a Bill of this kind which merely transfers the difficulty.

How do you attempt to deal with this religious difficulty? The right hon. Gentleman just now—as, indeed, other speakers from that side also—seemed to think that in absolute defiance of logic or justice they can make exceptions, that they can treat a great political Party, supporting them in other things, differently in religious matters to everybody else. I say they cannot do it. But they have tried to do it by Clause 4. I am not complaining of the attempt to satisfy the Roman Catholics—let me be clearly understood—I only complain that they do not try and satisfy others. But in order to satisfy the objections of the Roman Catholics, which they must have anticipated, whose views on this subject have been always clearly expressed, they introduced Clause 4. But they surrender absolutely the whole principle of the Bill, surrender absolutely those irreducible *minima* of which they talked so bravely on the introduction of the Bill, if they maintain the exception in favour of the Catholics. I said at the beginning of my speech, and I repeat, that in order to pacify the Catholics you will have to give more, I am inclined to say I hope you will give more—but you will have to give it to us. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Who is 'us'?"] "Us" in this House means the Party with which I am associated and for which I am speaking, that is the Unionist Party. Now what did you mean, what did you intend, when you said that the principles of your Bill, to which you attach great importance, are the principle of public control and the abolition of tests? What do you mean by public control? Do you mean public control of secular instruction? With some natural consideration of special cases, that is a principle we are all ready to accept. We, the Unionist Party, have no difficulty. The late Government, by the Act of 1902, wished and intended to advance that principle of public control of secular education. We always held that very large advances had been made in that direction, and if you want now to go further we have no objection. But that is not the Bill as it stands. The Bill provides for the control of religious instruction, and that is a totally different thing. What I want to point out, in specially considering the large number of Dissenters who are in this House, is that the principle of control of religious instruction by the State is in total opposition to every principle that the Free Churches have ever laid down. When I think that these are the descendants of Mr. Henry Richards, of Dr. Dale, and Mr. Miall! What is the principle of the Liberation Society? Probably many Members on the other side belong to that society — do they know what the indefeasible principles of that society are? We are told—I have not examined for myself, but I give it, believing it to be correct—that, according to the Free Church Yearbook, one of the essential principles of that society is: "To oppose any payment for religious purposes out of public funds compulsorily exacted from all classes of the community." I appeal to members of the Liberation Society on the other side, at any rate, can you approve conscientiously of a Bill which throws all this additional cost, which maintains the existing cost of religious instruction, "out of public funds compulsorily exacted from all classes of the community"? I say, if you are false to your tradition and your faith, then you are thrown back to the other position—I venture to quote from my maiden speech—and you must assent to the separation between religious and secular instruction. Suppose we accept this extraordinary demand of a Liberal and a Nonconformist Party to control religious instruction. The Bill not only claims it, but it proposes to exercise that control in the most unfair and most partial manner, to exercise it in a way which, although it may not have been intended, must inure to the disadvantage of Catholics, Jews, and Churchmen, and to the advantage of the Free Churches, and the Free Churches alone. ["No!"] We have heard something of the Cowper-Temple clause, but curiously enough the right hon. Member for South Aberdeen, generally accurate in all these matters of detail, did not accurately describe that clause, although I do not differ from him much in the practical application of it. The clause prevents, not the teaching of doctrinal religion, but the use of any religious catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any religious denomination.

MR. BRYCE: I meant to say that, at any rate.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: But you observe there is a difference, at all events, in the possible use of the clause, although I do not think there has been a great difference in the practical use of the clause.

MR. BRYCE: I admit that.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It would be perfectly possible for the teachers to give doctrinal instruction without the use of any formulary distinctive of the sect.

MR. BRYCE : I intended to imply that, but my argument was that that had not been done.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN : We agree on that, then. Now under that Cowper-Temple clause, what has been substantially the effect ? The effect has been that, owing to the prohibition, boards which are not able, even if they wish, to give this doctrinal instruction by means of the ordinary catechism and formularies, have as an alternative the form of religious instruction which I do not intend to call the Nonconformist religion, but which has been entirely satisfactory to Nonconformists generally, almost without exception [MINISTERIAL cries of "And to Churchmen"], and not to Churchmen ["Oh"], not to Churchmen universally. You measure a grievance by the number of people who feel it. "If you are in a minority we burn you at the stake if you do not agree with us." I assert that in the knowledge of everybody there are great numbers of distinguished Churchmen, both ecclesiastics and Church laymen, who entirely repudiate this teaching, and refuse to accept it as satisfactory. Even those who have praised the teaching have always declared that, from their point of view, it is altogether insufficient and inadequate. But now contrast the treatment of the denominationalist, the effective teaching of whose view is prohibited by law, with the optional facilities which are given in order to enable the denominationalist to give the teaching he desires. In the one case it is compulsion ; in the case of this Bill it is only optional. What authority has anybody who cares for this denominational education to believe that in all cases, at all times, and in all districts the local authorities will concede the "facilities" the responsibilities for which are thrown upon them ? The right hon. Gentleman has said he believes in the sense of justice and fair play of the local authorities, which will induce them to give these facilities. Well, I suppose the Government have a sense of justice and fair play, but that has not induced them to give these facilities. Their Bill is all directed against the denominations, and then they say, "Oh, but do not think of that, we have got a loophole and we trust to the local authorities to be more considerate, more generous, more liberal-minded than we have been ourselves."

What is this Bill ? The title is, "To make further provision for education." Surely that is an absolute misdescription. What further provision does it make for education ? It is one thing of which the promoters of the Act of 1902, and especally my right hon. friend, may well be proud, that the principal part of his Bill—too much lost sight of, but by far the larger part—was directed to the unifying and improvement of secular instruction, and was deliberately framed in the interests of the children ; and with regard to those new provisions no alteration, no addition hardly, has been suggested. This Bill, however, ought to be called one to settle the religious difficulty. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton, getting into a flame of histrionic indignation, denounced my right hon. friend the Member for the City because, apparently, he had said the intention of the Bill was to injure the Church. We judge from the terms of the Bill, and in all matters of life most of us from the written word judge the intention. The right hon. Gentleman gave an assurance that it was not intended to injure the Church. That is the opinion of the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton and probably some of his colleagues ; but is that the opinion of the President of the Board of Trade, whom I am sorry not to see in his place ? Many cooks went to this broth. What did that right hon. Gentleman say last night ? One sentence that will remain in all our minds for a long time to come was quoted from a great Frenchman. He said, "Clericalism is the enemy." [MINISTERIAL Cheers.] And Nonconformist religionists of different denominations cheer that. The Frenchman who used that expression had a different situation altogether to deal with. He had to deal with a clericalism which threatened the law, which was considered to be opposing the law, and interfering in politics. Clericalism at that time was thought to be hostile to the State, and for these reasons it was declared by this great statesman to be the common enemy. We have got your definition of clericalism—those who interfere in politics: have you ever heard of political Dissenters; those who oppose the law: have you ever heard of passive resisters ?

Do not make the mistake of thinking that you can identify clericalism, or the declaration that clericalism is the enemy, with one sect, with one denomination. If it is the enemy, I think, on the definition which I have extracted from your assents it is much less the enemy than certain Nonconformists sects which I will not name, which it would be invidious to mention. No, Sir, clericalism is not in this country the enemy. I hope it never will be. With all our religious dissensions I hope we shall retain our respect for all who are ministers of religion and who honestly and sincerely preach and teach the things they believe. But, no doubt, it is impossible to doubt, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, when he used that expression, had not the innocent intentions towards the Church which are proclaimed so loudly by his colleague the Member for Wolverhampton.

I do not pause to dwell on the object of the promoters of this Bill. If I have been able to make myself understood in the arguments I have put before the House, I ask you now, as politicians, do you think that this Bill will be a final settlement of the question with which it undertakes to deal? Are not you wasting your time? [Cries of "No!"] Do you think you are advancing our common object? I ask you, as politicians, to look at the practical situation. You have a majority so large that in defiance of all the minorities—the minority here, the minority there (pointing to the Nationalist Benches), and the minority there (indicating the Labour Party)—you can, if you like, carry this Bill through the House of Commons without the slightest amendment. According to our constitution it has got to go elsewhere. ["Oh!"] I am dealing with the practical situation. You do not deny that it has to go elsewhere. When I think of the circumstances, I do think there may be some peculiar incidents in that House. I can conceive of the very difficult position in which a certain noble Lord, whom we all respect very much, but whose religious opinions differ from those of the majority, will be placed if he has to introduce this Bill. Anyway, it has to be considered that the Bill may be amended. I ask you, whatever its fate in another place—whether it is ultimately destroyed there or destroyed by your refusal to accept Amendments which may be put into it—what do you think you will gain if there is another appeal to the people? One thing I say. In this House we are in a minority, but on this question there is not the slightest doubt that practically, at least, half the people of this country are opposed to this Bill. [Cries of "Oh."] You profess to think not. Wait for the election and we shall see. We are equally confident, and nothing but an express test will finally settle any difference of opinion between us. But, although you may say not, for the purpose of cheering your spirits in this House, there is not a man amongst you who knows anything whatever of political agitation in this country who does not know in his heart that whatever happens, if you went to the country on this Bill, you would come in with a smaller majority and you would justify any action that may have been taken against you. But I go further. Suppose, on the contrary, that the people of the country are so enamoured of this Bill that when it becomes the sole issue—when Chinese slavery and the big and little loaf are all forgotten—they give you a majority bigger than ever and we are reduced to some half dozen, almost solitary, individuals on these benches [Cries of "Seven."]—I accept the compliment. I will answer for seven. But when that occurs, again I say, do you think that a settlement of this kind, which will leave behind a rankling in the hearts of a very large proportion of the people of this country, can be final? One fears that you will force the Party here, waiting, as we have to wait, for the swing of the pendulum, which you all know must come, to inscribe the repeal of this Bill upon their banners, and you will leave the religious controversy where it was—tossed from side to side without any better chance of settlement than it has ever had in the past.

There is only one way in which you can settle this question. You must settle it by some measure which will be recognised by the people of this country—I am not now speaking of clericalism—as inalienably just. You must adopt the principle—a principle which appears in times past to have been accepted by the President of the Board of Education and the President of the Board of Trade; I have quotations from their works and speeches which show that there was a time when they accepted the principle—of the right of the parent. Of course I agree with the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo that you must not carry that right to an absurd extent. The right of a parent, for instance, certainly does not extend to brutalising his child or to depriving his child of advantages which the State intended he should have. But we all know what we mean; and we say, most of us at any rate, that a parent has an inalienable right to be consulted, or, at all events, to secure, in some form or another, substantially the religious education which he desires for his children.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): At the cost of the State?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will answer that at once. If anybody gets it at the cost of the State, then it is the inalienable right of everybody. There are two ways of doing it. Everyone knows that the State can provide, in every case, what the parent wants. That is what is done in some other countries. I think the hon. Member for Louth the other day rather elaborately argued that it was impossible. It is not impossible. It is done now in this country. It is done in the industrial schools and in the workhouse schools; and I do not wonder that somebody has wittily said that, in order that a parent may be secured in the exercise of his inalienable right to have his child taught the religion of which he approves, either the parent must die or the child must commit a crime. That is one alternative. I do not believe that, with good will, it would not be possible to carry out that alternative. After all, that is the alternative at which the old system aimed. That was the object which was, roughly, carried out by the Bill of 1870, which allowed of provision being made, side by side, for children of very denomination. The fault of that system, that which has given rise to most of the sense of grievance, is that it is not adequately distributed throughout the country. In certain places, no doubt, there is not sufficient choice; but, if you take the towns, I do believe the system at present is substantially fair. But that is not the alternative which I ventured to press on the House thirty years ago, and which, holding the same opinion, I press upon the House this afternoon. I say the most logical, the fairest, the most reasonable and the most easily attainable of all systems is the system which separates the duty of the State from the duty respectively belonging to the parent and the sect. We are told by Members of the Government that really one of the main objects of this Bill has been to prevent that system which they describe as a secular system, which they call turning the Bible out of the schools, and bringing up the children in atheism or irreligion. There is nothing whatever of substance in that cry. Like all other cries with which we were familiar at the last election, it has gone to the bourne from which no political cry ever returns. What we propose, we who advocate this system, is not secularism. I can conceive that there may be earnest Agnostics or Secularists, who aggressively desire the teaching of their views; but I am aware that they are absolutely insignificant in number, and what we, who talk of this separation, all desire is not secularism, but a division of duty and of conscience.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): Will the right hon. Gentleman forgive me for interrupting him? He says, "What we desire." On a previous occasion in his speech, we had to ask what he meant by "We." He said of course it was the Unionist Party for which he was speaking. Does "We" still mean the Unionist Party?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: On the present occasion "We" means those who agree with me. When the right hon. Gentleman intervened I was about to say that in the practical application of this principle I admit there are serious difficulties. We tried three years ago in the board schools of Birmingham an entire and absolute separation; but that experiment, under the conditions in which it was tried, was not a success. If you attempt to make a separation; if you allow any child to be absent who pleases at the time that religious instruction is given, you offer a premium either to the child to stay away or to a selfish parent, who wants the work of his child, to keep him from school. In my opinion, therefore, the religious instruction must be given within the compulsory school hours, although all parents who desire that their children should not attend the religious instruction would, as a matter of course, have their children instructed in secular work during the period of religious instruction. I am perfectly certain that you would demoralise the school if you tried to bring in a certain number of children, say, at 9 o'clock for religious ,instruction and the remainder at 9.45. You must have all the school assembled at 9 o'clock, the opening hour. That is part of the facility which I and we—again on the same definition—would desire to give. I am totally unable to understand the logic or the justice of those who pretend to lay a prohibition on the teachers against teaching religion. That they should not be compelled to teach it, of course, we all agree. That no test as to their religious opinions should be exacted from them at the time of their first appointment I think we all agree. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh" and "We?"]

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman say again which particular "we" is it this time?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have just consulted with my right hon. friend the Member for the City of London, and I believe that during the whole of this debate no one on this side of the House has expressed anything inconsistent with what I have just said. If that is so, on this occasion I may claim that "we" represents the Unionist Party. Let me make the position quite clear. I say that when a teacher comes forward to enter a great State service there is no more reason, no more justice, in exacting from him a profession of any particular religious opinion than there is in doing it in the case of more important servants of the State. [MINISTERIAL cheers.] Why hon. Members opposite should display such boisterous exhilaration at the statement of a fact which no one has ever denied I cannot for the life of me see. Let us take a practical case. Here is a school to which teachers who have made no profession of any religion are appointed. There is desired by so many Nonconformists religious teaching in accordance with the board school syllabus. There is desired by so many Churchmen religious teaching in accordance with the Church. There may be others who will make similar demands. These teachers being there without any previous test, what is there to prevent them—if there is general knowledge on their part that such religious teaching is desired, and that they would be favourably received if they offered to give it—what possible reason is there for interfering with their liberty in time which is not the State's, but their own, and in refusing to permit them, if they choose, to come forward voluntarily and say, "I should like to give board school instruction"; or "I should like to teach the Church Catechism"? That is not a test. Supposing they offered to give their services for secretarial work out of school hours, who is to prevent them, and who is to say it would be unreasonable, in such a case, to inquire as to their ability to give this secretarial assistance? I desire—to avoid all possibility of further intervention by the Prime Minister —I desire that the teachers should have full opportunity to offer themselves to be taken on and paid by the denominations, or the representatives of the parents in a particular case. I therefore claim that the facilities afforded to any endeavours to secure separation between religious and secular instruction should include liberty to the teacher to offer himself to give religious instruction, if he is willing and desires to do so. I suppose we are all convinced that a great number of the teachers would so offer themselves if such an opportunity were given. We tried in Birmingham, quite lately, to give denominational teaching by the help of the different denominations who sent in their own teachers. The school teacher was not obliged to attend, but every teacher in every board school did attend. Why? They said that, if they were away during the time of religious instruction, it would take them an hour afterwards to get the school into good order. Their experience was that, although they took no part in the religious instruction, their presence at the time was necessary for the general discipline of the school. I conceive that on either of the two lines I have submitted to the House you may have a permanent settlement. I have expressed my preference for the line I mentioned second. But you will never have a permanent settlement on lines like those of the present Bill, which are palpably unfair to a very large section of the community, which are opposed to their sincere convictions, and which they, in accordance with their conscience, can never agree to accept.

*MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In the speech of the right hon. Gentleman to which we have just listened there was less opposition to the main principles of the Bill than in the majority of the speeches to which we have listened from that side of the House. When I listened to the right hon. Gentleman it occurred to me that no great effort would be required, so far as the right hon. Gentleman and those who agreed with him are concerned, to arrive at some general settlement, not upon the lines of resistance to the Bill, but of amendment and modification. I have been struck by the variety and incongruity of the elements which are opposed to this Bill. We have on the one hand the English Church Union, headed by Lord Halifax; then you have the Anglican Bishops and a considerable proportion of the Anglican Church, which, though not prepared to follow Lord Halifax, are yet prepared to stand in with him in opposition to the Bill. Then we have the Roman Catholic Church, which of course from its own point of view opposes the Bill, and finds among the Irish Nationalist Party advocates to whose views we can listen with respect. Then we have the Unionist Party, who on this occasion are prepared to go into the same lobby with the Irish Party. Then we have the Labour Party who are prepared to vote for the Second Reading, but are not satisfied with anything but secular education pure and simple. Lastly, we have the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, in a class apart as a champion of the Church of England and the protagonist of voluntary schools, or perhaps better described as the consistent opponent of all established and endowed religions, and particularly of the further endowment of any special form of religion. The variety and incongruity of the opposition to the Bill almost inclines one to accept the suggestion that, our differences upon religious matters being irreconcilable, we should adopt the alternative of suppressing them in this House and agree to banish religion from the schools, falling back, as the last speaker was almost inclined to do, upon limiting the function of the State to purely secular instructions in our elementary schools. I do not propose to follow that course. I approach this Bill from a frankly Protestant point of view, while hon. Members below the gangway opposite approach it from a frankly Roman Catholic point of view. What does this Bill aim at? It aims at establishing one universal system of popular control under which, as far as possible, teachers shall not be debarred because they are members of a particular religious creed. Then we have to face the question which has already been dealt with by the hon. Member for Leicester and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and that is whether the State is to take any responsibility for religious instruction at all, and, if so, for what kind of religious instruction it is to take responsibility. I hope and trust that the kind of religious instruction which is proposed under this Bill will meet with general acceptance on behalf of the Protestant sentiment of this community. I am aware that members of the Church of England are not, some of them, prepared to accept what is called undenominational teaching, unless there is attached to it a system of dogma and sacramental instruction, which for my part I think the minds of young children are altogether unfitted to receive. But, in any case, I hope that we shall frankly face the situation and, as members of a Christian community, agree that the State must undertake responsibility for religious instruction of some kind, and that the only question before this House will be, for which kind of religious instruction we are prepared to accept responsibility. The doctrine of parental rights is one for which I have a very great sympathy. I believe that in the first speech that I made in this House I did emphasise the rights of parents in the matter of the religion of their children, though I think in its application the principle is to be dealt with in the same way as the application of all other general principles, and you cannot be severely symmetrical or logical. But I am quite certain of this, that if the State seeks to build a general system of religion in our schools upon the basis of parental right, inalienable or otherwise, it is building upon a foundation of shifting sand. We cannot get rid of our responsibility in this House by devolving it upon local authorities, nor by devolving upon parents the decision of whether they will or will not have religious instruction and which kind of religious instruction they are going to have. Let me recall what was recently said on this point by the Bishop of Birmingham. The Bishop of Birmingham in a pamphlet upon this Bill said—

> "Some thirty years ago there was a sort of a Protestant religion with a doctrine of the Trinity, of heaven and hell, of atonement and judgment, of resurrection and eternal life, which for good or evil could be more or less assumed. Such a standard has gone. I seriously doubt whether nearly one half of the grown men of the country could seriously say that they believed that Christ is God, or that he really rose on the third day from the dead. It is not that they have become Unitarian, but it is that their religious opinions are in a state of chaos."

That is the solemn utterance of an English Bishop upon the condition of faith among the adults of this country. What is to become of the children of these people? Are you going to ask these parents which kind of faith they want their children brought up in? I must say that if this is true—I think it is an appalling though exaggerated picture—but if there is any truth in it, it is simply monstrous to suppose that you can leave the religious destinies of the children of this country in the hands of parents who are not prepared to accept even the elements of Christian faith. The clause of the Bill which has excited most opposition is that clause which says that no attendance at religious instruction shall be required. This clause has met with the most determined opposition on the other side of the House, an opposition in which I fully join, and yet I am bound to recognise that, after all, it is only the principle of parental rights pushed to an extreme, because if you say that the parent has a right to dictate in which form of religious faith his children shall be educated it is only one step further—or perhaps it is only an equivalent step—for him to say whether his children shall have any religious instruction at all. That is a position which I for one decline to accept. I hope that this Bill will undergo substantial amendment in Committee, and I hope that one Amendment upon which this House will insist, unless it is prepared to accept the secularist solution, will be that this clause shall be deleted from the Bill. I cannot conceive how any one who is not prepared to accept the secularist solution—to adopt the suggestion either of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham or those of the hon. Member for Leicester, between whose ideas there appears to be only the very thinnest wall of partition—can fail to join with all on either side of the House who hold that if the State is to be responsible for religious instruction at all, it must make it part of the ordinary course of the school and not treat it as something attendance at which is a mere act of option on the part of the parents. Then I hope that we shall not in this House be confronted with a painful position as between those who adhere to and welcome in this Bill the principle of simple Bible teaching as the basis of religious instruction and the Churches who reject and oppose it and are not prepared with an alternative. Surely, Sir, the worst thing that could happen in this country would be that the State, with the Bible in its hand, should confront the Churches and that the Churches in response should say, "We reject the Bible and we have no solution which we can offer and which you can accept." I think that would be disastrous to the future of religion in this country, and I earnestly trust that some means may be found by which, accepting Bible teaching as the basis of our authorised instruction, for which the State pays and is responsible, adequate facilities may be found for those who think that this is insufficient and requires to be supplemented.

I do not propose to take up the time of the House by going at any length into the debatable point as to whether the facilities offered in this Bill are or are not sufficient. I quite agree with those critics who have said that they make such large concessions to the denominational principle that they do in effect vitiate the main principles of the Bill. I do not think that is any drawback to practical men desirous of settling a thorny question. I am perfectly certain that those who attempt to worship the goddess of logic at the expense of reason and conscience and practical suggestion will find that they are only unsettling instead of settling this question. Therefore, Sir, it is no objection to me, and I think it ought to be no objection to any reasonable man, that while this Bill does embody certain cardinal principles of popular control and of freedom for all teachers to rise to the highest ranks in their profession and also a standard system of religious instruction based upon the Bible, it is no drawback that the Bill gives additional facilities to those who are not satisfied with the religious education which the State is prepared to give.

Criticism has been directed against the clause which deals with the fixed majority of four-fifths of the parents, and upon which depends the continuation of denominational schools. I would ask for my part what majority hon. Members think should be allowed to trample on the rights of minorities. Surely there must be in such matters give and take. If you insist on four-fifths of the parents in the schools being in favour of a particular form of denominational teaching there is even then a hardship to the one-fifth which is not in sympathy with them. If this particular vulgar fraction is not acceptable then we shall in Committee have suggestions of another kind, but I am convinced of this: that whatever exceptions are made the difficulties of dealing with minorities of parents will still continue and it will be extremely difficult to find facilities which will be satisfactory all round.

So far as I am concerned I am prepared to give this Bill a Second Reading vote because it embodies certain principles which I believe were affirmed at the general election, and because, frankly speaking, from the Protestant point of view it does recognise the obligation of the State to give religious instruction. I hope before we have done with it to make it recognise it far more, and to recognise in that instruction that this, after all, is a Protestant country. I leave myself perfectly free in Committee to move or support such Amendments as will make it more fair, as I think it can be made, and make it more emphatic, in all its details, in the matter of the great principle of preserving the religious character of our elementary schools.

One word more, before I sit down, on the position of the Church of England. I assert without fear of contradiction that as regards the Church of England the appeal she makes is that the Bible is the rule of faith and final standard of authority. Everybody who knows the Articles of the Church of England knows that nothing is required from any member of the Church that cannot be proved by the certain warranty of Holy Scripture. That is the position of the Church of England. I understand that that is not the position of the Church of Rome, but it is fair and consistent for the members of the Church of England to welcome the appeal to the Bible which is the basis of the reform of his Church. And when we consider what is going on to-day in the Church, I will only say there is much disquiet to those who desire to adhere to the Reformation standards, in our schools, on which the Church is based. I hold in my hand the particulars of services in a church in a southern diocese for Easter week. The whole of those services are made up of low masses, sung masses, processions, stations of the Cross, and what is called Catechism Mass. This is not in a Roman Catholic Church, but a Church of England, and it is common notoriety that these things prevail. What I desire, and what I have desired for many years, is that in the elementary schools which belong to the Church of England this kind of thing should not be allowed. Whatever they may be in other places, they are not in their lawful place there, and for my part I welcome any Bill, if it is just in other directions, which will put a stop to these illegalities and vagaries which have done so much to weaken the confidence of the Protestant population of this country in the Church of the Reformation.

Now I desire to say, in conclusion, one word as regards this Bill, and the possibility of a final settlement of our differences. I have spoken quite frankly from the Protestant point of view. I hold Protestant opinions strongly. I sometimes notice in the public Press that they are described as narrow-minded, bigoted and vulgar. It is the fashion in a Protestant country to talk in this way, whilst the utterances of our Roman Catholic colleagues in this House are described as conscientious and devout. I object to that. I think we ought to give to every school of thought respect for the conscientious convictions which it possesses, and in the matter of education try to find a solution; and it can be done, with due consideration to the always admitted fact that this, after all, is a Protestant country and the centre of the Protestant forces of the world. I should be only too glad to join in any efforts to arrive at a peaceful, final and lasting solution. I read occasionally something of the triumph of Parties and of policies. I say nothing of political Party triumphs, but I do say that in the matter of religion triumph of Parties, and policies, and persons should be accepted with fear and trembling. I am old enough to have learnt that in controversies of this kind the victories which come even to righteous principles may be pushed too far. I recognise that it takes all creeds to make a nation, and I trust that this Bill may be so modified before it finally receives the signature of the Monarch that, instead of having for twenty years still to battle over what is called the religious difficulty, it may prove the means of equitably and satisfactorily adjusting the differences in what is, after all, a Christian country.

*Mr. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton): I listened with some surprise to the speech of the hon. Member for the Toxteth Division of Liverpool in which he set forth the grounds upon which he supported this Bill. He told us he was a Protestant. He told us also that he contemplated the present position of the Church of England, so far as its Protestant condition is concerned, with great disquiet. Of course everybody knows to what the hon. Member was referring; he was obviously referring to the forthcoming Report of the Royal Commission. But with great respect to him, whatever may be the effect of that Report of the Royal Commission on the matters with which it deals, it has about as much to do with the Bill before the House to-day as the question of King Charles' head. I believe I am largely in agreement with many of the views the hon. Gentleman has expressed to-day. If it be established as the result of that Royal Commission that there are cases of illegality with which it will be proper to deal, then they must be adequately treated, but I am utterly at a loss to fathom the intellectual attitude of those who put before the House the view that, because there may be five or six—or twelve or more persons if you like—who disobey the law of England, therefore they will support a Bill which will or may be unjust to all those members of the Church of England who have no desire at all to disobey the law. I conceive that this question of Protestantism is a mere red herring drawn across the trail of this Bill, and I venture to say that it comes with very little grace from a Member of this House who is going to support the Second Reading of a measure in respect to which there is every reason to apprehend that special concessions to Roman Catholics are about to be given. I do not say myself that I would view with anything but satisfaction the concessions asked for by the hon. Member for East Mayo and his co-religionists on the lines of his speech; but I do suggest that if these concessions for which the hon. Member for East Mayo asks are not rendered impossible by a cast iron wall of principle—if that be not so, then those who on these benches represent the Church of England are equally entitled to claim them. To deal with the converse of that proposition, if there is some cast iron wall of principle which prevents you making these concessions to the Church of England, then you are guilty of a pusillanimous repudiation of this principle if you extend such concessions to hon. Gentlemen sitting below the gangway in derogation from everything said at the time of the election and of the principle upon which we are told the vote of the country was given. Many claims have been put forward as to the ground upon which we are asked to support the Second Reading of this Bill. The Minister for Education has told us that it embodies two great principles; first, he says it will effect and bring about a national settlement, and, secondly, that it will make for simplicity in the schools.

I do not think the most sanguine Member of this House will attempt to say that this measure is likely to effect a national settlement. I suppose if there is one circumstance which must have prevented this measure being accepted as a settlement it is the deplorable speech of the President of the Board of Trade, who told us—and the phrase was dealt with by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham—that democracy had pronounced clericalism to be the enemy. I wonder whether Members in this House recall the utterance of a gentleman of whom I speak with respect—Dr. Clifford—when he said that he was minister at Westbourne Park for the same reasons and principles that he was president of the Paddington Radical Association. I do not suggest that that may not be true, and that the claim may not be well-founded; but I do suggest that if you sit in this House, as so many do, as the result of oratorical efforts on the platform by battalions of Noncomformist ministers, it is not wise, it is not decent, and surely it is not grateful to tell the House that the enemy democracy has to fear is clericalism. When the hon. Gentleman puts himself forward in this House as being authorised to tell the House what it is democracy wants, and suggests that democracy has given an opinion on the subject of clericalism, I would ask him and also others who sit in this House whether they suggest that they were returned on a basis of anti-clericalism. I hold in my hand an Answer that interests me because it was given by the Attorney-General for Ireland, who sits like myself for a Division of Liverpool. He was asked by a man of Roman Catholic faith whether, if returned, he would support a Bill upon the lines which we are discussing to-night. Did he answer, or did any who sit on the Ministerial side of the House answer and say, "We are following the democracy, and the democracy has said that clericalism is the enemy." Let me read what he said—

> "I am in receipt of your letter of the 9th inst. in which you have submitted to me a question as regards the right of Catholic parents to have their children educated in the elementary schools in conformity with their religious opinions. I have already, I think, answered the question in my election address satisfactorily to Catholics, and I need only repeat here that I shall do all I can to preserve for Catholics in any Education Bill which the Government may introduce, the right to have their children educated in their own faith, and by teachers of their own faith. I think that is all they ask for, and every reasonable person of any religious conviction must admit the reasonableness of that demand."

It is carrying cynicism too far for one Member of the Government to come down to this House and to tell us that what democracy says is that clericalism is the enemy and for another member of the Government when he wanted to get into the House and to conciliate the feelings of those who were likely to be his constituents to protest that no reasonable person could dispute the right of Catholics to have the Catholic religion taught in their schools by persons of that persuasion — a claim very unlikely, if conceded, to diminish the influence of clericalism.

This Bill, so far as it is put forward as a national settlement, will fail, and it will fail so far as it is put forward as a measure of simplicity, for you must remember that you found in existence two schools and you are leaving by this measure four schools. You are leaving, in the first place, provided schools; in the second place, facility schools; in the third place, special facility schools, and in the fourth place, the excluded schools in cases where they are either the subject of a private ownership or are held under trust which permits of exclusion. Do not let the House think for a moment that the fact that you are going to leave four classes of schools will make no difference to your educational machinery. It all means complication and proves the impossibility of that simplification of machinery

Mr. F. E. Smith.

which was put forward by the Minister who introduced the Bill as one of its chief merits. The Bill will fail not alone on these grounds, but on grounds which go deeper still, because it is not a compromise nor a concordat, but a mere brutal dictation of terms. ["No."] Hon. Members say "no." I venture to think that when the clauses of this Bill are examined and when the principles are tested, not in the light of what was said below the gangway on the Opposition side or in the light of what I and my friends say, but in the light of those who have been held entitled to speak for the Liberal Party in times past—judged I say by that test it is a brutal dictation of terms. You must re-write the old reflection and say "Thus conscience doth make bullies of us all." Let me remind the House of what was said by the Minister for War, than whom there is no greater authority on education, and who has worked for education while others have shrieked. I will remind the House of what he said in 1902 when the Bill was introduced. He wrote deliberately and away from the heat of debate—

> "If the Liberal Party came into power to-morrow, and tried to establish a general school board scheme, it would find itself in even a more serious position than that in which Mr. Gladstone was in 1870, when with a huge majority he failed to accomplish this very thing."

This is the view which the Minister for War took. I would ask hon. Members opposite whether there is no justification for saying it is an imposition, a brutal dictation of terms, when I remind them, as has already been said in the debate, that it is not in controversy between the two sides of the House that dissenters get, under this Bill, what they are conscientiously satisfied with for the education of their children. I do not say, and it does not in the least matter whether you use the expression, that dissent is endowed. I am willing to avoid the term if any hon. Member thinks the term offensive, but when you penetrate beneath the words to the substance, no one can deny that you are getting by the assistance of the rates the form of religious education for your children in the schools which satisfies your conscience. You are getting what Mr. Gladstone called the popular injustice of undenominational instruction, and what he called elsewhere the glaring partiality, so far as it appeals to the rates, of undenominational instruction. If Mr. Gladstone was right in saying it was a glaringly impartial application of the rates, is it not possible that there may be some ground for the grievances seriously felt on this side of the House? The hon. Member for North West Ham in an interesting speech said that the Government had no mandate to stamp on the country one form of religious teaching, and that to attempt to deal with it in this Bill was to load the dice. Do not hon. Gentlemen think that when one of their number, returned to this House to support them, describes their policy as a loading of dice, that there may be ground for saying that it is dictation of terms? If we go below the gangway we find the hon. Member for Blackburn saying that Nonconformists in their joy at having Nonconformity established as a State religion are embracing a measure which will inflict an outrage on the majority of this country. Is that right or wrong? If it is true, is it to be suggested that there is no grievance? If it is well-founded, surely you can realise that you are imposing by Act of Parliament on the majority of this country and forcing them to pay for a creed which is not their creed. Surely these observations from their own ranks might make hon. Members a little more tolerant when we attempt to place before them the view which is held by the majority of the clergy and the laity of England. I would ask hon. Members in dealing with the opposition of the Church of England not to dismiss it with the curt statement that it is merely a matter of the bishops' agitation. I think they realise as well as I do that from the moment the bishops of the Church of England cease to have behind them the laity of the Church in the protests they are making you may deride their opposition. If hon. Gentlemen think that in this matter the bishops have not the support of the vast majority of the Church of England behind them they are likely to have a very rude awakening. And when we are told that Nonconformists under this Bill are securing no special advantage, I will merely ask some subsequent speaker who has a right to speak on behalf of Nonconformists to tell us of one fundamental article of his particular creed which is excluded to-day from that national system which you are putting on the rates. I ask him to call attention not merely to some point of collateral teaching, but to some point of doctrine which goes down to the foundation of his belief and is taught in the Sunday school of his own providing.

*MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): Can the hon. Gentleman tell us of any fundamental doctrine of the Church of England which is excluded?

*MR. F. E. SMITH: It is obvious that I could give the hon. Member half a dozen. I need only mention the Sacrament. Although the opposition of the Church of England in this matter is in principle the same as the opposition of the Church of Rome and of the Jewish Church, if you are going to contend that the principle on which you won this election does not preclude you from making concessions to hon. Gentlemen from Ireland or the Jews, how are you going to differentiate a principle between the Jews, the Roman Catholics, and the Church of England? Does the hon. Gentleman wish to discriminate at all? He is by no means so ready to intervene in the debate now as he was a minute ago. If it is his object to introduce such differentiation between the Jews, Roman Catholics and the Church of England, what becomes of his principle that under no circumstances will he have what have been described as religious tests for teachers. The right hon. Gentleman who introduced this Bill said that in this matter he relied upon the moderation and good sense of the local authorities. If you are going to give that special treatment you are face to face with the inexorable necessity which you cannot avoid of consenting, and you will have imposed those very same inquiries which have been described as tests by hon. Gentlemen in the country. [" No, no."] If they were not tests perhaps someone will explain why they were abused on every platform as being tests. If they were, then you are going to reproduce and perpetuate them in this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill has not the courage to impose them himself, but he encourages the local bodies to do it. When I am told that I do not do justice to the views of Dissenters when I say that they have all the religious teaching they want from the rates, I reply that this position is not one which has ever been put forward by the great Parliamentary Dissenters in the past. Have hon. Members on the Ministerial side ever read one of the most able presentations of the Nonconformist case in an education discussion—I refer to the speech of Mr. Miall who said—

> " The Bible is our only Book; no creed, catechism, or liturgy is its rival with us."

[MINISTERIAL Cheers.] I note with great satisfaction that approval. If the Bible is your only book, then you are getting your only book at our charge for the purpose of the religious education of your children. [" No, no."] Hon. Gentlemen cannot have it both ways. They cheer the declaration of Mr. Miall and when I retort that they are getting at our charge the only Book they want for the purposes of religious education, it is idle to meet that statement with clamour. If hon. Members opposite are not satisfied with Mr. Miall's view, let me recall a statement made in the same debate by one who had at least as great a claim to speak with authority, Sir William Harcourt. He said—

> " What is the doctrine of religious equality? If I understand the doctrine it is this: that the State in its relation with its citizens is absolutely indifferent to all forms of religious teaching, and as regards any funds raised either directly by the State or indirectly under its authority, one form of religious opinion has as full a right to share in the appropriation of such funds as another."

Those were the views of the old Liberal party, and we ask to-day whether you adhere as a broad declaration of principle to the view that so far as the appropriation of public money is concerned, one religious denomination should benefit equally with another, that the creed which demands special books and formulæ shall be in no worse a position so far as public money is concerned than the creed which, like your own, is represented by the Bible without any liturgy or catechism. That is the simple demand which has received the high authority of Sir William Harcourt. When we are told that the position is a new one, I would ask hon. Members to recall the decision of 1870 and the compromise which was then entered into by all parties. The State was then called upon to repair years and decades of educational neglect. You had then to establish a universal school board rate, and you had to rate Roman Catholics and Jews, who would rather die illiterate than use your schools, and you had to rate Anglicans, who rightly or wrongly, have raised millions of pounds with the intention of avoiding Cowper-Temple instruction. Hon. Members opposite should remember that the measure of 1870 could not have been carried in face of the opposition of the Church of England and the Church of Rome if it had not been on the perfectly well understood terms of a permanent compromise with both those Churches. If that proposition is doubted, I would remind hon. Members of the words of Mr. Forster, who said—

> "If the Conservative party had used Party tactics to oppose the Bill it never could have passed."

There you have the fact that the Bill introducing a universal school rate would never have been passed without the support of the Church of England, and the consideration you then gave was that voluntary schools, whether Catholic, Church of England, or Jewish, should be permanently incorporated in the educational system of the country. This is no mere matter of inference of mine from chance words uttered in the debate. Let me remind you of what Mr. Gladstone said on this very point. He said on the Second Reading debate—

> "The machinery of voluntary schools we found not only existing in this country but overspreading it, and on every ground, but particularly on the ground of what is due to the promoters of these schools and their benevolent and self-denying labours—"

That is a higher note than clericalism, the common enemy—

> "We adopted as the fundamental principles of the Bill that we would frankly employ voluntary schools, but because we cannot do with voluntary schools alone we proposed to fall back on the rates and fill up the gap which we saw."

When the Leader of your Party and the Minister who introduced your Bill in 1870 said to those who had built and supported voluntary schools, "If you will also consent to a rate, if you will assist us to pass this Bill which we cannot pass without your support, we will only treat the new machinery as a means of filling gaps in your system," is it suggested that it is just or honest to come to the House of Commons in 1906 and say to those who represent those schools, "Although those were the terms which were made, we will now —I will not use the word confiscate— appropriate by forms of law the schools which we were only going to supplement when we extorted from you your assent in 1870?" Between 1870 and 1902 £23,000,000 were raised by those who supported voluntary schools for the purposes of their maintenance. I give the hon. Member for North Camberwell all the credit he is entitled to for the industrious energy with which he has shown that some of this money was subscribed by railway companies. Making all allowances for that, it is sufficient for my proposition that in those thirty-two years millions of pounds have been subscribed by these who feel that denominational teaching is in the interests of the children. I think it was an Under-Secretary who said a week or two ago in this House in another connection that wrongs may be forgiven, but anything in the nature of a trick or chicane will always rankle. I say for those who were induced to consent to that settlement in 1870 that you are not entitled to say they were induced to give that consent, without which you could not have passed your Bill, without something in the nature of a trick or chicane.

It is suggested now, on grounds which I have never been able to understand, that in 1906 a new principle came into play. I would like to ask hon. Gentleman opposite what single circumstance existed in the year 1906, so far as the position of voluntary schools is concerned which did not exist in the year 1870, when the compromise was made? [MINISTERIAL cries of "Rates."] Hon. Gentlemen tell me that since 1870 the rates have come. Let me ask them to think for a single moment what is involved in that contention. Let me ask how high you can put the conscientious objection which depends on the rate. No one can put it higher than this, that you must not impose a public burden on a man in order to make him pay for a religion which affronts his conscience. Will any hon. Member say it matters whether the public burden is collected by the municipal or the national tax collector? The grievance, if there be one, is the same in both cases. I contend that the ground of principle was conceded once and for all in 1834, when the State granted £20,000 to the voluntary societies, and it was again conceded in 1839 when £30,000 was substituted as the amount of the grant. I say to those hon. Gentlemen who tell us in 1906 that their consciences are affronted, that their predecessors in the Nonconformist world were not men who objected less than they do to pay for religious education which was not theirs, but they did not seek for the tolerance of the auctioneer or jostle into a well-advertised prominence at the police court. Were they less righteous than hon. Gentlemen, or were they merely less intolerant? If the position is put before me as one hon. and learned Gentleman put it, as being a distinction in the nature of a rate, if it is going to be seriously contested that it matters whether it is a tax or a rate, I would ask him whether he has ever considered the circumstances under which we are rated for religious instruction in the workhouse? I do not know whether he is aware that to-day in the workhouse, denominational religious education is being given at his and my charge. It appears that in the effort to understand this conscience, with which we are told we must not jest, we must draw a distinction which goes even deeper. We must not draw merely the distinction between a rate and a tax. It appears that sometimes you may pay a rate in support of denominational education without affronting your conscience, but you may withhold the rate, and pray in aid of your conscience to violate the law, if by doing so you can injure the Church of Rome or the Church of England, or the Unionist Party. Sir, though we may not jest with these consciences we may perhaps point out that they jest with themselves. I have only to add that when we are told that the real remedy for one at least of the grievances which have been felt in the past is that children shall not be compelled to go to school during the hour in which religious instruction is given, then I would remind hon. Gentlemen of a sentence in which that suggestion was once and for all dismissed by Sir William Harcourt, who said—

> "You tell us on the one hand that religion is the basis of all education, and we accept that statement and establish religious schools. You say it is the greatest, the most important part of education, and then you give effect to your declaration by telling the children when they come to school, you must not fail to attend to reading, writing, arithmetic and geography, but there is one subject you should entirely neglect, if you please. When religious instruction is about to be imparted, if you object to the teaching, you should go out and play at marbles in the gutter."

The President of the Board of Trade said that simple Bible teaching alone stands between the country and secular education. What is the value of this barrier so long as you allow any child who would rather play in the playground to avoid religious instruction to do so. I would ask the House to consider the advice given by the President of the Board of Trade in 1903 to the Welsh Councils in an interview given to the representative of the *Manchester Guardian*—

> "Let all the children go out for a few moments and then let those who prefer the catechism to play return to the religious instruction, while their playfellows are free to continue their play. He had no doubt that the children would have such a regard for the apostolic succession as would draw them back to the school while the wicked went away bird-nesting."

If that is the spirit in which you are going to work, the less you talk about the value of the barrier against secularism which you are erecting by this Bill and the sacrifices you are thereby making the better it will be for your reputation for sincerity.

It has been pointed out that the expropriation clauses of this Bill are among the most objectionable. Here again the President of the Board of Trade said—

> "In the main the expense of building these schools fell upon Churchmen. For my own part, I would no more rob the Church of property that is legitimately hers than I would rob my own little chapel of its property."

I have not heard that the triumvirate is going to deal with the little chapel, but if it were, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would have a little more regard for the feelings of those whose property is going to be placed in the hands of that triumvirate. The Government have proposed to offer a partial bribe to one section, and they have undergone the unspeakable humiliation of seeing that bribe despised by those to whom it is offered. [Laughter.] If those who laugh think that the four-fifths clause is going to be accepted in its present form, I venture to say they will be rudely undeceived by speakers who will follow below the gangway. Let me close with another quotation from Sir William Harcourt—

> "What becomes of the minority? They are offered religious education which does not suit them. It must not be said that they can get secular education. I presume that the minority require religious instruction as well as the majority and you offer them a form of education paid for out of the rates that they cannot use. Do you tell me that is political justice or religious equality?"

I say, speaking for the rank and file of the Party to which I belong, that we shall offer to this Bill, at every stage, a sustained resistance both in principle and in detail. We shall address, so far as we can, a larger, audience than that we are addressing within these walls, and we shall look forward to an ampler division lobby than that which is about to register your fleeting triumph.

*MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): I am sure that the House listened with admiration to the speech of the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool—a speech of great brilliancy, and cogency, expressed with remarkable modesty, which is quite proper in a new Member, and dealing with affairs of the past as though he were an old Member of thirty-five years ago. We must object, however, to be tied down to the plans, the ideals, or even the expedients of thirty-five years ago. I would remind the hon. Member that much water has run under Westminster Bridge since then. Compromises and arrangements which were made then and which then were practicable and fair have ceased to be practicable and fair now. One essential part of the arrangement made in 1870 was that a good share—a considerable share—of the cost of maintaining the voluntary schools should be provided by voluntary subscriptions. In 1902 that essential part of the compromise was withdrawn by the action of the Government of that day, and the very basis of the arrangement of 1870 has ceased to exist. I did not object to the decision of 1902 to equip financially all schools to the same extent and from the same sources, and to transfer the maintenance of the voluntary schools to the local authority. But I pointed out then—as others did—that before very long that change in the compromise of 1870 would bring about the complete transfer of voluntary schools to public control. The Government has been returned by a huge majority to bring that about, and I believe the means by which they propose to bring it about are fair and wise. I note that throughout the debate there has been no opposition brought forward to the removal from the hands of the clergyman and his three fellow foundation managers of the power of managing the voluntary schools. That point of the Bill appears to be generally conceded. You must have popular control. The next leading principle of the measure is that teachers who are public servants renumerated by public money shall not be subjected to any denominational tests. At present, a Nonconformist teacher does not apply for the head teachership of a non-provided Church of England school because he knows that, no matter how well qualified he may be in other respects, he will not be appointed. Similarly a Protestant teacher never applies for an appointment in a Roman Catholic school. The Bill, however, says that the local authority shall not in future inquire into the religious faith of teachers in making appointments; and that teachers may claim the benefit of a conscience clause in regard to the giving of religious instruction. I believe that in future Protestant teachers will not apply for appointments in schools which under the four-fifths provision are distinctively Roman Catholic, and every applicant for employment in a Catholic school will be a Catholic. The fears of Catholics that Protestant teachers will be foisted on Roman Catholic schools are groundless. In the same way, I believe that no teacher will apply for an appointment in an Anglican school unless he be a member of that communion. That is how it will work out in practice, although by the Bill all teachers are theoretically and practically freed from all denominational tests and placed on the same footing. In the third place, the Government has been instructed by the majority of the country to prevent as far as possible the compulsory teaching at the public expense of denominational religion to children whose parents do not wish them to receive it. In the past it was the case that the children of Nonconformist parents sometimes attended Anglican schools and that Protestant children attended Catholic schools. The Government propose that in all these schools the teaching of religion shall not be compulsory upon the local authority, and that no child shall be compelled to receive religious instruction where it is given. On two days in the week volunteer teachers of the same denomination as the children may come in and give dogmatic teaching. At present, not one-fifth of the time of the children is spent on religious teaching in the Anglican schools. I understand from the hon. Member for the Walton Division that there should be a right to give instruction in the Catechism. They will have that right by the Bill through the clergyman or curate or amateur teacher on two days per week. I understood the hon. Member to say that the children might withdraw from that instruction, and he blamed the President of the Board of Trade because that right hon. Gentleman had said that the children might remain in the playground during the hour of religious teaching. Does the hon. Gentleman not see that if a parent wants to have religious teaching given to his child he will see to it that it is given; but what right have we, or the local authorities, or the school managers to compel a child to attend religious instruction which his parent does not require for him? There is a great amount of nonsense talked about religious atmosphere, and about the parental demand for dogmatic teaching. I am bound however to recognise that that exists among Roman Catholics, and teachers tell me that Roman Catholic parents earnestly desire that their children should receive in Roman Catholic schools instruction in the Roman Catholic faith. If that is the case in schools where four-fifths of the parents are Roman Catholics that instruction can be given. That is to say, the teachers in such a school would be Roman Catholics, for no Protestant teacher would apply for an appointment in a Roman Catholic school, and even if he did, no local authority would appoint him. With the four-fifths majority the scheme of the Bill is perfectly fair. In the one school area children are to have on three days in the week undenominational teaching, and on two days in the week there will be denominational teaching, so that in that way religious instruction in the district is safe-guarded. In urban areas, that is in places with a population of 5,000 and over, speaking from practical experience, I firmly believe that in the working out of Clause 4 by the four-fifths majority, parents will get all that they desire either as Roman Catholics or Jews. My right hon. friend the Minister for Education has been told hundreds of times during this debate that this is not to be a final settlement; that this Bill is not the olive branch of peace. I do not suppose that he ever expected that it would be. In the long, slow, painful process of the evolution of a national system of education from a system of clerical control, many proposals have been made, many schemes of development have been passed, and some of them have proved abortive. As the Act of 1902 was the parent of the present Bill, so this Bill will be the father to its successor. Principles on either side have to be considered, both by the Anglican and Catholic Party, and by the Free Churches, who have stood up in the past for freedom of judgment. Concessions have to be made in order to effect a working arrangement, and I submit that this Bill does that. It is a singularly clever and workable Bill. I would warn my right hon. friend opposite that in the Bill there is a certain balance of concession, and a certain equilibrium of justice to all parties, which must not be lightly disturbed. He must not lean too much to one side or the other. What will be the safeguard of this Bill in the country? What is now the governing influence to prevent the extension of the agitation against the Bill by Anglican ecclesiastics? Hon. Members know that behind that agitation and outcry there is no real backing from the laity. [OPPOSITION cries of

"Oh, oh!"] And why? It is because the laity are never too anxious for definite dogmatic teaching, and are not prepared to sacrifice the training of their children for this life to preparation for the next under clerical management. I listened with interest to the most eloquent and pathetic speeches from the Members for Ireland. I would like to contrast these speeches with the speeches of the official Opposition. In tone, spirit, knowledge, fairness in controversy, the Irish speeches were all that could be desired, and I would assure the hon. Members that on this side of the House we are willing to go a long way, as far as may be, with them, but I maintain that it will not be possible to claim for ever a continuance of the clerical system. We on this side of the House cannot at the present moment present an unbending front, we may make concessions with safeguards; but I believe that this Bill will make for the progress of education throughout the land. There are two points I wish to press on the Minister for Education. There are Roman Catholic and Anglican teachers who would like to impart the religious instruction in their schools. My right hon. friend says that no teacher should be compelled to become a religious teacher, but it might be provided that there should be full liberty to do so so long as the "volunteer" was not compelled and became a "pressed man." Again, in the case of non-provided schools the Minister for Education has made arrangements in the Bill to the effect that a teacher shall not suffer by the transfer; but he has not inserted in the Bill anything in the way of compensation to a teacher who is displaced because the trustees and the Local Authority cannot agree to continue the school. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will find means of dealing with that question.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): I am very far from desiring to depart from the tone of good temper and moderation which has prevailed generally during this debate, and of which I think we have had a very admirable example in the speech to which we have just listened. It is a good omen for the ultimate shaping of this Bill that hon. Members opposite have been fair-minded enough to recognise, that if Irish Members have felt it to be a duty to intervene, and to intervene actively in this debate, it is because we in a very special manner are the representatives, and with very few exceptions, the direct representatives in this House, of Catholics in England, nine-tenths of whom are of our own blood and kin. They have never deserted us in the hour of necessity for Ireland and it would be a base desertion indeed if we deserted them in regard to a Bill which has alarmed them in regard to their consciences, more actuely than any other Bill which has been brought forward during the last thirty years. The point of conflict, or of anything like irreconcilable conflict between us as representing the Catholics and the Government, is really rather circumscribed. From all the speeches that I have listened to from the other side of the House, I believe that there is not a man on the opposite benches who really desires to force Protestant teachers, or Protestant teaching, upon the Catholic schools. I was very glad to hear the declaration made upon that subject by the hon Gentleman who has just sat down, and that is the very essence of the matter which threatened a division among the forces in this House and between us and those who in regard to other matters we may be in sympathy. If the assurances of the hon. Gentleman opposite can only be worked out legally and in a way which will protect the Catholics of England against caprice or mere ebullitions of local fanaticism, I do not think it would be beyond the power of fair minded and far sighted statesmanship to find a solution which would pave the way to the settlement of other points which are in difference. The Minister who is in charge of this Bill has displayed a spirit and a disposition to recognise frankly the altogether exceptional necessities of the case in reference to Catholic and Jewish schools, and in such a way as really not to leave very much to be desired on our part, unless it is that his words and intentions should be embodied in the Act itself. As to the right hon. Gentleman himself, I do not think any one of us have any difficulty in believing in and recognising his perfect sincerity, but unfortunately it is not his words, but those contained in the Bill which govern this matter. It is the legal powers given to the local authorities to deal with the parents of over 250,000 Catholic children that we have to look to, and we have had some wonderful experiences in Ireland, during the working of the Land Purchase Act, of how often even the most flattering promises and the most generous intentions of a Minister in this House can be bedevilled by the bodies, who after all, will have devolved upon them, the carrying out of the intentions of Parliament. The hon. Member for Bath made an appeal to us to trust the English democracy as they were willing to trust us. I quite agree. I am a sufficient believer in popular institutions when controlled by a large public opinion to believe that the local authorities in general will accept in a generous and magnanimous spirit the provisions to be applied to Catholic and Jewish schools, as distinguished from those which are to be applied to the different sections of the great Protestant body who are united in the belief that the Bible is the sole depository of dogmatic teaching. I quite agree in that. But it is the minority of cases that we have to guard against, where these local authorities, under the chances of an election, may fall under the domination of some noisy and intolerant local clique in some rural parish, where there would be no opportunity of arguing with them, and no public opinion to set them right. I venture to say that this Bill does not provide a shadow of a safeguard for the Catholics of England if once they were to surrender their rights in their schools. The right hon. Gentleman himself alluded to the pig-headed and obstinate forces which at any time in any civilised country may break out, and he freely confessed that these local authorities were not the easiest to handle. If they are not easily handled by a powerful Minister with all the power of the Education Department at his back, how does he suppose that they are going to be handled by the members of a very small and perhaps despised Catholic minority in a backward district in England, where it may come within the power of any single headstrong bore or bigot who wishes to overrule it? It seems that the right hon. Gentleman himself has a secret intuition that not merely abstract utterances but definite provisions are necessary if this Bill is to succeed in quieting the consciences of large masses of the people whose children attend these schools. It is clear that the utterances of the right hon. Gentleman are not intended to be merely platonic, and I do not think any one in this House will suspect the right hon. Gentleman of duplicity, but why not say in the Bill the way in which these schools are intended to be worked? The right hon. Gentleman tells us that he shrinks from applying coercive measures against these bodies; but, really, are they so sacrosanct that they cannot be dealt with? For what does the Local Government Board and the Education Department exist if they are not able to restrain these local bodies from a larger and broader point of view? This Bill, however, does not provide an appeal of any sort from the decision of these narrow tribunals in the matter of all others—that is to say, local sectarian prejudice—where they stand most in need of some appeal. You find it necessary to constitute a Court of Appeal against the highest and best trained judicial intellects in the country, and yet a poor Catholic minority in some backward district in England has no appeal of any sort against an act of oppression which may be inflicted upon it, by narrow-minded parochial bodies, in direct contravention of the spirit professed, and I have no doubt sincerely entertained, by the Minister in charge of this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech to the Jewish deputation, stated that it was his intention that the schools should be carried on just as they are carried on now, and that it was his intention that the schools and teachers should remain as they are. Why not give it incontrovertible legal efficacy by translating his words into a few plain sentences in the Bill itself? So far as I know there is no objection to the principle of public control as to everything relating to the material efficiency of the schools. We welcome every test of efficiency that can satisfy the ratepayers that they are getting sound value in the way of secular education for their money. But no man of enlightenment will contend that popular control has any business to interfere between a man's conscience and his God. Popular control would destroy the right of the parent to transmit to his children the possession which he values more than any other, and which he would not part with for any consideration on earth. We must not have other creeds forced on us in the Catholic schools. The Nonconformists of England themselves have exactly the same traditions of suffering for their belief, and they have shown the same consistency in adhering to their belief. We admire them and respect them for it. The hon. Member for Louth, I think, last night reminded us—he need not have done so, for we are not in the least danger of forgetting it—of all that Ireland in the days of O'Connell owed in its splendid struggle for civil and religious liberty to the Free Churches of this country. I hope the hon. Member and his friends also have not forgotten either that in the days of O'Connell the representatives of Ireland did something to repay their debt in days when the Dissenters of England were struggling to get rid of shackles, which to some extent reduced them to something like the position of an inferior race. And the hon. Member will scarcely deny that even in our own day the representatives of Ireland, by their votes, have had some share in bringing about those great social reforms which are the ornaments of Nonconformist history. It would be with anything but a light heart that I should see the temporary severance in any working of these forces which have so many common interests and ideals. It would be all the more lamentable because our quarrel is with the words of this Bill rather than the intentions of the right hon. Gentleman. We are claiming absolutely nothing which is not of the essence of religious liberty, namely, that the religious instruction which this Bill concedes ought to accompany secular instruction shall be religious instruction conformable to our own faith and not the teaching of other faiths, however good and sacred they may be. Without going into the data of Catholicism and Protestantism, all the world knows that the difference between our belief and that of the different Protestant communions of England is that theirs is a belief which believes in the Bible as the sole source and foundation of dogmatic belief, whilst in the other case its interpretation is not left to be a matter of common judgment, and the Bible does not stand alone as the sanction for our faith. It is not with any desire to introduce the *odium theoligicum* into this debate that I mention that fact, but to remind the House that while Biblical teaching may and ought to form the common ground of the Protestant communions, and therefore must be the logical basis of religious teaching in the Protestant schools, that teaching would be antagonistic to the principle which is the very foundation of our faith. It is the principal barrier, the insurmountable barrier, between us, and upon this there can be no possible compromise. The right hon. Gentleman recognised that when he stated that the schools should be conducted in the future as in the past and that it was the statutory obligation of the local authority to carry that out. I think it would be ten thousand pities, when we have come so very near a common standpoint, for the sake of the larger interests of this Bill, and the great work that is before this Parliament, if some effort were not made to put down in black and white a legal recognition of what in the abstract is now recognised as the just claims of the Catholics of Ireland. It would be not candid, and worse than idle, for me not to insist on that particular point, that the teaching in every Catholic school shall continue to be Catholic and shall not be of any other faith. On that point the whole Catholic body of England and Ireland is as absolutely and unchangeably united as it is possible for a million of men to be. They have not for centuries faced disabilities and suffering, they have not made incredible sacrifices out of their poverty and nakedness, to build up these schools in England in order to hand over the fruits of their struggles in the shape of these schools to persons other than of their own faith. And I say in conclusion that the more the Catholic claims and attitude are examined by the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Education the more inevitably he will recognise that in the firm and temperate attitude the Catholics have taken up they are making a stand for conscience' sake to which every generous friend of liberty, than whom there is no greater than the right hon. Gentleman himself, will honour and do justice.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned"—(*Mr. John Redmond*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

*MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead) said he desired to call attention to public expenditure and to move, "That this House is of opinion that the growth of expenditure on armaments is excessive and ought to be reduced; such expenditure lessens national and commercial credit, intensifies the unemployed problem, reduces the resources available for social reform, and presses with exceptional severity on the industrial classes; and it therefore calls upon the Government to take drastic steps to reduce the drain on national income, and to this end to press for the inclusion of the question of the reduction of armaments by international agreement in the agenda of the forthcoming Hague Conference." It seemed to some of his hon. friends a proper time to press the consideration of this question upon the attention of the House. The Resolution was brought forward in no spirit of antagonism to the Government; indeed, quite the reverse. They felt confident that they had in connection with this Resolution the hearty sympathy and support of His Majesty's Government. This was a new Parliament returned after a great campaign in which the importance of a reduction in non-productive expenditure was one of the issues. They realised that the Government had only been a short time in office, and that it would have been very difficult for the Government to remodel the Estimates which they inherited from their predecessors, but during the next twelve months both the House and the country would expect the Government to do something in the direction of a reduction of expenditure in order to carry out the pledges of the Party, and it was partly with a view to strengthening the hands of the Government on this question that he pressed the Resolution on the attention of the House. It must be obvious that a declaration by an overwhelming majority of the House was of value as a moral support to the Government in their task of retrenchment. He also ventured to say it would have great effect on the other Parliaments of the world in considering the question of bloated armaments. Practically the Liberal Party had not been in power for twenty years, but they now had an enormous majority behind them, and he believed he spoke for the majority of the Party in this House when he said it was expected that as soon as possible they would reorganise the spending departments of this country on lines that would keep up the great traditions of the Party. Few Members believed that the abolition of armaments was practicable, but they believed it possible greatly to limit this expenditure. The Resolution incidentally mentioned the importance of the question from the standpoint of the burden on industry. Unless some step could be taken to reduce expenditure substantially a demand would be made that the burden should be apportioned in a different way from that in which it was at present proportioned. The burden fell too heavily upon the great mass of the badly paid and those who had an insufficiency of this world's goods. Those, therefore, who believed it was essential to keep up the present expenditure on armaments would have to face the alternative of shifting the burden from the industrious to the idle. Roughly speaking, we were spending 100 millions a year in preparation for coming wars or in interest on the capital cost of past wars. Such a sum seemed discreditable to a so-called Christian nation. The sum mentioned, if capitalised, represented little short of 2,500 millions of money. But the most remarkable figure in connection with this matter was the enormous increase during the last ten years. Including loans for naval and military works, we had added during the last ten years about forty millions a year to our expenditure. He was glad to hear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day that these loans were to be stopped, for the expenditure should at least come out of revenue so that the country should not be misled. The capital sum represented by £40,000,000 was £1,000,000,000. Was it realised that in ten years those responsible for the finances of this country had for all practical purposes more than doubled the National Debt? Our burdens would have been no greater if £1,000,000,000 had been borrowed, and we were paying an interest of £40,000,000 a year on it. Those who were connected with business had known during the last few years what effect this enormous expenditure had had in depreciating our credit. Further, it had deprived the country of funds which could have been otherwise used to carry out social reforms. The guarantee of £40,000,000 a year would represent the housing of 4,000,000 people at £250 a house. He merely mentioned that to indicate the enormous bearing this subject had upon social and economic reform. But they could not have it both ways. If they went on in the present lavish way with regard to armaments, the money could not be available for building up the happiness and prosperity of the people of this country. He would cite one or two facts to show the close relationship between expenditure and the condition of the people of this country. The statistics of crime and pauperism followed the lowered credit of the country which sprang from wasteful expenditure. During the period in which our credit had been going down as a result of this excessive expenditure, pauperism had increased by 10 per cent. Beggars had increased by 30 per cent. What to him was of even greater moment was the fact that whereas before this crisis in our financial position our people were able to increase their savings at the rate of more than £9,000,000 a year, since our credit had been depreciated the increase had dropped to £3,000,000 a year. Whatever was the condition of the people, one would have to admit that if this expenditure were needed for the defence of our country and homes, it would have to be borne, but those who demanded a reduction of the expenditure contended that the increased expenditure had not been accompanied by increased efficiency. The cost of the Army was now nearly double what it was in 1894, and he asked, had that increase been accompanied by double the increase in the strength of the fighting force. They had poured out money too lavishly to this Government Department, and they had not had that check upon extravagance which ought to have been exercised. He could give the evidence of expert after expert showing the inefficiency of our fighting forces. It was the duty of this House to see that public expenditure was properly checked. Recently in the Far East a new power had come into being, and fortunately this country was on the best terms with it. He was also pleased to note that we were on the most cordial terms of friendship with France. The race with regard to armaments which had been going on between this country and France for a good many years could now, to a large extent, be regarded as unnecessary. There was no need for them to continue to keep up that keen competition with regard to the relative strength of armaments that used to exist before the conditions changed. With regard to Russia, her Navy was practically no more. He submitted that these were facts that should cause them to consider expenditure in this direction with a view to pulling up the credit of the country. They should nurse their commercial strength in order that they might be able to command the sinews of war for any struggle in which they might be engaged. This was not the time to be wasting our resources. He submitted to those of a warlike tendency that this Resolution was one which should commend itself to them. Then there was a question of a limit in this race. We had increased our expenditure by £40,000,000 during the last ten years. What guarantee was there that there would not be another £40,000,000 increase in the next ten years? Were we to continue in this mad race without any attempt to check it. He thought there was want of strength and character in the demand that we should always have sufficient fighting strength to overwhelm everyone else. The House must have more confidence in the people to rise to the occasion, should an emergency arise. He had confidence in those who lived in the British Empire to meet any such emergency. The object of the fighting force of this country should be a defensive and not an aggressive one. If we were going blustering all over the world in connection with an expansive policy, then there would be no limit to the expenditure that would be required to satisfy the demands of experts. If we confined ourselves to the defence of territories which we had already acquired, then there would be no need for the immense annual burdens which were now being placed upon the country. He ventured to suggest with regard to the power of defence that there were two things which were occasionally overlooked in connection with preparation for war. One of them was the power to borrow £500,000,000 quickly and cheaply, and in his opinion that was worth an Army corps. If the country continued to waste its resources and keep its credit down, the difficulties of meeting an emergency would be enhanced by the policy which it was now pursuing. If only to get the credit of the country up, the House ought to take the course suggested by the Resolution. Then there was something in having a contented population. Speaking from the artisan's point of view, he might say they had no intention of encouraging or even permitting, if they could stop it, the continuance of the race in which this country had been engaged in regard to armaments. He realised that these burdens must fall upon those who worked for daily wages. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, it was practically impossible absolutely to arrange the finances of the country in watertight compartments. Any wasteful expenditure must fall with bad effect upon those engaged in daily toil. If it were put upon the income-tax payer he might go short of some little luxury, but it would be found that he would curtail the employment of some kind of labour. They could frequently connect large dismissals in trade with the increase in public expenditure, notwithstanding the fact that that expenditure might be coming directly out of the pockets of the class that might not be described as the working-class. Indirectly, however, it found its way down to the pockets of the poor, and in the long run any extravagant expenditure fell on the great mass of the working classes of this country. If this expenditure was to be maintained they would have to demand that the burden should be placed in some direct way upon the gambler and the speculator. The people had stood too long the present method of taxation, and he hoped the Government would so arrange taxation that it would fall upon those who got rich while they slept and not upon those who got poor while they worked. That was the line he and his friends intended to follow up. It was unreasonable to expect that the great mass of the working people were going to tolerate the burdens that had been imposed upon them without some protest. With regard to the Hague Conference, he learned with regret that the Czar had left out in his notice the question of the reduction of armaments, although at the first Conference that question was considered. He hoped at that Conference that the representatives of the British Government would be instructed to press for the inclusion, amongst the subjects discussed at the Conference, of the question of the reduction of the armaments by international agreement. Some years ago Lord Goschen expressed his willingness to consider that question, and perhaps he would be permitted to read his Lordship's words. Lord Goschen said—

> "I have now to state on behalf of His Majesty's Government that similarly if the other great European powers should be prepared to diminish their programme of shipbuilding we should be prepared on our side to meet such a procedure by modifying ours. The difficulties of adjustment are no doubt immense. Our desire that the Conference should succeed in reducing the tremendous burdens which now weigh down all European nations is sincere, and if Europe comes to no agreement, and if the hopes entertained by the Czar should not be realised the programme I have submitted to the House must stand."

All that was asked on this particular point was that the House of Commons should renew that appeal, as it were, to the other nations of Europe, and to express here and now their willingness to discuss the possibility of a reduction of armaments by international agreement. He hoped that a representative of the Government would be able to tell the House that they viewed this proposal sympathetically, and that they were prepared to accede to the recommendation in the Resolution. In connection with the expenditure for warlike purposes there was a tendency for vested interests to perpetuate their existence. An increased expenditure of about £40,000,000 a year brought within the zone of vested interests a vast number of human beings, and if hon. Members thought of that for a moment they would see how dangerous it was to continue along that line. He viewed with alarm the enormous extension of our arsenals and our yards of a Royal character. After the necessity for them had ceased they had officialdom and other interests all determined to perpetuate themselves at the expense of the industries of the country. It was the duty of the House to see that they did not intensify that evil—that they did not create more than was absolutely necessary. He was glad to note the other day that Lord Tweedmouth referred to the value, in the case of a crisis, of the private yards, and of private methods of producing the things which were required. It was practically impossible, except at an intolerable expense to the people of this country, to keep up the Royal yards and methods of production which would give us in time of war, or in time of danger, all that we required. If that was attempted, a burden would be created in time of peace which the people would not tolerate. What was the result of a policy of that sort? Fits of economy were followed by fits of expenditure, and nothing was worse for efficiency than that method of going on. He urged, therefore, that a watchful eye should be kept on the growth of the permanent non-productive expenditure. The political influence represented by £40,000,000 was enormous, and it had its effect on the House. When speaking of the enormous increase in expenditure during the past ten years, he should like to say that it took over a century of wars and preparation for wars to get our expenditure up to between £36,000,000 to £37,000,000 annually on armaments. During that period, which embraced the time of Napoleon, England had been engaged in some of its greatest conflicts from which she had emerged with some amount of honour and glory—certainly rather more than she got in her latest struggle—yet in the last ten years we had run the expenditure on armaments up to £76,000,000, or more than double. The explantaion of the increase was that those responsible did not exercise sufficient check on the experts who recommended the expenditure. He was always willing to consult experts on technical details, but it was for this House to say how much in the aggregate it was prepared to spend on matters relating to the defence of the Empire, after consultation, of course, with the responsible Ministers of the Crown. He denied that it was wise to allow generals, captains, and other officers to decide how much should be spent in these directions. He believed the present Government were prepared to stand boldly out for economy. Parliament would not deny them the money required for securing efficiency. He and his friends were as anxious to defend the interests of the Empire as those who were in favour of this lavish expenditure, but they said that efficiency was not necessarily obtained by wasteful expenditure which threw an enormous burden on the taxpayers. The Resolution did not call upon the House to do anything of a revolutionary character. Most hon. Members were pledged to economy when they were returned to the House. He saw no reason why hon. Members in all parts of the House should hesitate to support the Government in any effort they might make to have this question of armaments considered by the different nations of the world when they met at the Hague Conference. They were all proud of what England had done in the past in the cause of progress; they would love her more if she would take her proper place in regard to this great question of lessening the horrors and evils of war. We had an enormous responsibility in connection with the question raised in the Resolution. We were an island, and had natural means of defence that many other nations had not got. We ought, therefore, to be prepared to risk something and to take the first part in bringing about conditions that should make it possible, not only to reduce the cost of armaments in our own country, but also to make the burden lighter for the artisans and labourers in every country in Europe. He begged to move.

*MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said his duty in seconding the Resolution was considerably lightened by the exhaustive and able speech of the hon. Member for Birkenhead. The Resolution asked the House to declare that the expenditure on armaments at present was excessive; that being excessive it weakened our national credit; and that, in so far as it reduced our credit, it tended to intensify and aggravate the problem of finding employment for the people at home. This expenditure also tended to reduce the resources which ought to be available for the carrying out of great projects of social reform, and it fell with greatest severity on the industrial classes. No one would deny that our expenditure on armaments had been growing with alarming rapidity. It might be that he was getting into the reminiscent stage and was inclined to review the work they had accomplished, or attempted to accomplish. He would like to point out to his right hon. friend that when he with himself entered this House for the first time a good many years ago, our expenditure upon the Army and Navy was only £30,382,000. In the present financial year the estimated expenditure on these services was £62,345,000. Our entire national expenditure at that time was only a little over £89,000,000. To-day the cost of the Army and the Navy, with the interest on the National Debt, amounted to over £5,000,000 more than the entire national expenditure at the time the right hon. Gentleman and himself entered the House. He wished that we had received satisfaction for that expenditure in the way of necessary and legitimate reforms or in the way of honest value for the proportionate increase in the national expenditure. Had we to-day the sense of efficiency and security which we ought to have for the money we were expending? He maintained that we had not that security; that the Empire was in no better position to-day though the expenditure on the Navy and Army had more than doubled during the last twenty years. If they were to take the authority of Lord Roberts, expressed in the other House, it was doubtful whether the security of the Empire was as good to-day as it was at that time. No one would deny that this excessive expenditure ought to be checked. He believed that it was the deep intention of the present Government to reduce the growth of that expenditure. Nobody would deny that the national credit to-day was not what it was ten or fifteen years ago. We could not borrow money now so readily and cheaply as then. Anything which tended to weaken the nation's credit made it more difficult to raise money cheaply, and to intensify the problem of dealing with the question of the unemployed. When money was cheap public bodies were induced to put into operation great constructive works necessary for the comfort and convenience of the people; but when money was dear those great constructive works were left undone and the nation was made to suffer thereby. If we went on wasting our national resources, we could not hope to see these great problems of social progress, which we all had at heart, carried into effect. He had always understood that the Empire was run in the interest of the whole, and not in the interest of only a portion of it; and he believed that there were others outside the United Kingdom who might reasonably be asked to share the expense of the Empire. He regretted that there had not been a free offer of such assistance in the cost of running the Empire. To-day we were in receipt from the whole of our Colonies and Dependencies of less than £500,000 towards this heavy burden. He anxiously looked forward to the time when some Minister or some Government, even at the risk of diminishing his or their popularity, would face this question boldly and courageously and seek to bring about an international agreement for the reduction of expenditure on armaments. Any Minister or Government who undertook that duty would in his judgment command the eternal gratitude of the industrial classes of the country. Nobody rejoiced more than he when such a proposal was put before the last Hague Conference. He thought that at last an honest attempt was going to be made to reduce the cost of armaments all round. That hope, however, had only been raised to be disappointed. He knew that the mind of the Foreign Secretary ran in that direction, and he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to tell the House that night that so far as he was concerned, and so far as this Government were concerned, they would do their level best to have a proper discussion with the view of arriving at some amicable international arrangement by which these huge armaments should be reduced to reasonable proportions. What was the relative advantage derived from this increased expenditure on armaments? When we built a "Dreadnought" at a cost of £1,000,000, the United States decided to build a battleship which would be larger and more efficient and cost not £1,000,000, but £2,000,000. If the nations went on in this mad way what was to be the end of such foolish expenditure? It was far better to come to some common arrangement whereby these huge armaments should be reduced to more rational and reasonable proportion. For these reasons he seconded the Motion presented by his hon. friend.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House is of opinion that the growth of expenditure on armaments is excessive and ought to be reduced, such expenditure lessens national and commercial credit, intensifies the unemployed problem, reduces the resources available for social reform, and presses with exceptional severity on the industrial classes, and it therefore calls upon the Government to take drastic steps to reduce the drain on national income, and to this end to press for the inclusion of the question of the reduction of armaments by international agreement in the agenda of the forthcoming Hague Conference.—(*Mr. Vivian.*)

*MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) in moving an Amendment to the effect that the House relied on the Government to maintain British Naval supremacy, and that it was inadvisable for this Government to initiate a discussion concerning the armaments which foreign Powers deemed necessary for the defence of their territories, said he could not hope to rival the eloquence of the mover and seconder of the Motion. Those hon. Gentlemen, however, had no monopoly of the hatred of war or of bloated armaments. He did not believe that any Member in the House was not in favour of efficiency and economy. The whole question was a question of means. The Resolution stated that the expenditure had not been accompanied by efficiency. If that meant that the "Dreadnought" battleship was not a good substitute for the "Royal Sovereign," that argument was fallacious, because one "Dreadnought," although it cost £1,800,000, could blow ten "Royal Sovereigns" out of the water though the latter each cost nearly half as much as the "Dreadnought." Therefore there was a greater increase of efficiency. His hon. friend had taken the House back to the expenditure on the Navy a hundred years ago, but his answer to that was that the British Empire would not be in existence at the present moment if the expenditure on armaments had not increased. The Empire would have been distributed among more powerful foreign nations. In his opinion the one hope of reduction of armaments was in an Anglo-American alliance by which each Power would guarantee to come to the assistance of the other if attacked by two Powers. On the ground of continuity of policy he also contended that it was undesirable that this country should press for a reduction of armaments, and pointed out that, as far as the late Government was concerned, the then Prime Minister, with the advice of an excellent Defence Committee, refused to pledge himself, and always refused to pledge himself, to take any steps to initiate such a movement. The policy of the speech of Lord Goschen delivered in March, 1899, to which the mover of the Resolution and his hon. friend referred, essentially differed from what was now being pressed for. If the Motion had merely embodied what Lord Goschen said, there was not a man in the House who would oppose it. Lord Goschen said—

> "I have now to state on behalf of His Majesty's Government that if the other great naval Powers should be prepared to diminish this programme of shipbuilding we should be prepared on our side to meet such a procedure by modifying ours."

It would be seen that the noble Lord expressly stated that the initiative as to the reduction of armaments must come from foreign Powers. [Cries of "Why?"] Because we regulated our armaments by those of foreign Powers, and because our naval armament was vital to us. It was kept up solely for defence, and we could not carry on great operations against foreign Powers by means of our Army. If once the Navy was defeated we were "done," as our food supply was cut off. But though our Navy was vital to us, theirs was not vital to foreign Powers. He would point out that, as the mover stated, the Hague Conference was especially summoned to bring about this reduction of armaments. They passed an amiable resolution in favour of the reduction of armaments; but since that there had been an increase of armaments by every Power. Germany gave effect to the resolution by building in the next seven years fourteen battleships to our seventeen, which latter figure was not out of the way having regard to the margin of safety. France also had increased the number of her battleships. Last December Lord Cawdor, referring to the large reductions which had taken place in British naval expenditure, said—

> "The public cannot rely on this reduction being continued in future years if foreign countries make developments in their shipbuilding programmes which we cannot now foresee."

The reply of the Emperor of Germany shortly after the utterance of Lord Cawdor was contained in his speech from the Throne this year, in which he said—

> "Our continually growing economic intercourse with all countries beyond the seas demands now urgently a stronger naval representation of the Empire abroad. For this purpose there will be laid before you a Supplement to the Navy Law, and it will provide for the increase of the number of ships on foreign service by the addition of six large cruisers. Moveover, the allied Governments find themselves compelled to propose to you a considerable increase of the battleships and large cruisers which were asked for in the Naval Budget of 1905 so that our German warships shall not be inferior in fighting strength to the ships of other nations. Finally, you will be asked to grant money towards bringing about a greater power of readiness to strike on the part of our torpedo-boats. I cherish the confident hope that the German Reichstag is prepared to increase our naval defences."

It was also a significant fact that the German torpedo flotilla had been stationed in the North Sea opposite Great Britain since Lord Cawdor's statement of Admiralty policy. In view of that he thought the best thing we could do was to remember Napoleon's declaration, and that our obvious reply as to policy was contained in his words—

> "The only way to prevent the Continental Powers from bridling you is for England to proceed in her proper sphere as an insular Power possessing the command of the sea."

That was, he thought, good advice to-day. When Lord Palmerston instructed our Ambassador to remonstrate with Napoleon III. on the increase of armaments, the answer was the snub which we were still liable to receive to this effect. "Let each look after his own business; you ought to be twice as strong as I am." That was sound advice. Cobden originally urged that free trade and commercial intercourse would make nations so dependent on one another that war would be impossible. That prediction had been falsified. [Mr. VIVIAN: We have not got free trade.] Cobden, as he got older, however, became disillusioned. In other words, in 1836 he was a Manchester doctrinaire on the defence question, but in 1856 he was a blue-water school man, and had abandoned all fanciful ideas about disarmament in our time. Mr. Cobden would have been still more convinced if he had lived to-day and saw how the only economists who had achieved anything were the blue-water school. There was no critic who deserved praise more than Mr. Courtney for the sincerity of his intentions. He had the courage of his convictions. Mr. Courtney, forgetful of the fact that his policy cost the Northerners, through want of preparation, in the Civil War 320,000 lives, said—

> "He admitted that it wanted some courage to face the risk of reducing armaments. Were they prepared to run that risk? In the matter of military preparations, as in the matter of free trade, they had better not wait for the co-operation of other nations, but they must run the glorious risk in leading the way."

Hon. Gentlemen cheered that statement, which was logical from their point of view, but he would remind them of some recent history. The Afghan frontier incident in 1885 cost us £12,000,000. It was a panic expenditure which had been wholly wasted, and arose because we had allowed the Navy to run down.

A few years afterwards there was the Fashoda incident, when the country was prepared. There was no panic on the Stock Exchange, and it cost only £13,000 in Admiralty expenditure. If at that time the Navy had been allowed to run down there would have been a financial crisis in this country. During the South African War there was a reasonable chance of attempted coercion of this country by a combination of European Powers. There was no panic, but had the Navy been allowed to run down there would also on that occasion have been a great financial crisis. Our wisest policy was the policy of Chatham, who said in 1770—

> "The precaution that meets the disorder is cheap and easy; the remedy which follows bloody and expensive."

We had given proofs of pacific tendency; we had given up Heligoland and made a reduction in our Navy Estimates of £7,086,000 in two years, as compared with Germany's, without exercising any perceptible influence on German feeling, which was obviously one of great antagonism to us. ["No, no."] That was the fact, however much we might regret it. It might be due to misrepresentation. He thought it largely was; but it existed during the South African War, and through the influence of the German Navy League, which had a membership of 600,000, as compared with the Navy League membership of a few thousands in this country, it existed very much now. He would echo the words of the French Minister two years ago, who said—

> "Other nations can follow our example; acts are worth more than idle words."

So far from following our example, France had recently laid down six battleships, compared with our two, and Germany two battleships every year. He thought that disarmament was proceeding at present in respect of the guns in our battleships, as we were not replacing obsolete guns or providing a sufficient reserve of heavy guns, while not long ago thirteen battleships and sixty cruisers had been put aside as obsolete, six battleships and about ten cruisers only taking their place. This surely showed a considerable reduction in armament. But let them suppose that an agreement were made to reduce armaments, no force existed by which the agreement could be carried out. There existed only public opinion, and nations had violated public opinion before now. Again, what standard were hon. Members going to adopt? Was it to be a money standard? If so, then the voluntary services in the navies of Great Britain and the United States could not be compared with the systems of enrolment elsewhere. If trade, shipping, colonies, or coast-line were the standards then either the British Navy was already too weak, or the French and German too strong. If the standard of the number of battleships were adopted it could be easily got over by an increase in tonnage among the other powers, and if armoured vessels were not built the torpedo power might be increased. Then as the armoured ships became through obsolescence less and less able to defend themselves, the little torpedo-craft would become more and more developed and dangerous. The final result might be that Great Britain would find herself placed in the position of having lost her naval supremacy. In his judgment the Navy preserved peace, and history had shown that the Navy had preserved the liberties of the country throughout the centuries, protecting us at the same time from invasion. He probably spoke with a more sentimental interest in the Navy than hon. Members generally would care to show.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): Nothing like leather.

*MR. BELLAIRS: But he did not think that the British Navy was a thing to be bartered about among the foreign powers. At present a committee of foreigners regulated the sugar policy of this country, and he would certainly think twice before he entered into any agreement by which foreigners should be allowed to regulate the maritime policy of this country. The Government should not go beyond an expression of their readiness to enter into a conference provided the initiative came from foreign powers, who were not so dependent on their navies as Great Britain undoubtedly was upon hers for the preservation of liberty and peace. He begged to move.

*CAPTAIN HERVEY (Bury St. Edmunds) said he rose to second the Amendment of the hon. Member for King's Lynn. He thought, however, that a Member of this House other than a naval officer might with advantage have risen for this purpose. He agreed entirely with the hon. Member when he said that he did not think it would be a good thing that the naval policy of this country as a whole should be discussed and decided by a committee of foreign naval experts. That was the line he took upon this question and that was the reason he had risen to second the Amendment. The House should consider what duties our Navy had to perform and what duties foreign navies had to perform. We were in a different position from any other country in the world. It was true that we had the biggest navy in the world, but then we had the largest responsibilities in the world for our Navy to carry out. We had to protect 54 per cent. of the whole merchant service of the world with our Navy, and in addition to that to protect the coasts of a world-wide empire. If we were to sit round a board and discuss the Naval necessities of each country with a foreign committee we could not take ship for ship with any one country or with any two countries and say we were in a position to carry out our responsibilities. The real reason why we were not in a position to discuss our naval affairs with the representatives of foreign countries was that in order to make it clear to these people that it was necessary for us to have any particular number of ships, we should have to disclose the plans of action, which obviously determined the extent of our armaments, and that was a thing which we must necessarily keep to ourselves. We should always be pleased to meet other countries and do all in our power to reduce the armaments of the world, but we could only do that with safety by having regard to what our necessities were. Let the other nations propose a reduction of armaments; we would consider that proposal in a most conciliatory spirit, but such proposals must in the first instance come from them. On these terms we could meet them and still occupy the position it was necessary for us to occupy—namely of being able to determine the armament we considered sufficient to protect what we possessed, and to protect our commerce. The building programe of this country as now laid down was only a programme that would in a few years time bring us to a simple equality with the next two naval Powers. The programme as laid down was no more than was absolutely necessary, and to go below that would be to go below the margin of safety, which no one would for a moment tolerate. He was quite ready to admit that we were at the present time in a slightly better position than under normal conditions we should be, owing to the disaster which had overtaken one of the great naval Powers of Europe, but that was not the fault of the Admiralty. The Admiralty had their eye glued on the results of the war between Japan and Russia, not only as it affected the ships themselves, but also in the way in which it affected the building programme of this country in the future. These considerations determined our present policy of building four armoured ships every year. If that were not continued, if it were dropped for only one year, there would be a hiatus which, though it might not be evident now, yet when our ships began to get obsolete we should find some time in the future one year when we had four obsolete ships passing out of our Navy and no new ships to take their place. All objected to building our ships with borrowed money, and therefore the object of the Admiralty's programme of building at the present time was to ensure that as each year some ships became obsolete and went out of commission, others should be built annually to take their place. Believing the policy he had referred to was the right policy he was very pleased to be able to second the Amendment of his hon. friend.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 6, to leave out all the words after the word 'income,' and add the words 'but this House relies on the Government to maintain British naval supremacy, and is of opinion that it is inadvisable for the Government to initiate a discussion concerning the armaments which Foreign Powers may deem necessary for the defence of their territories,' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Bellairs*).

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. CHARLES WILSON (Hull, W.) said he should like to support the Amendment because he thought that the country ought to keep up its Navy, whatever it did about the Army. He should like, however, to call attention to the fact that it would be a long time before there was a homogeneous squadron of ships of the "Dreadnought" class under the present proposals. He considered it would have been better policy to put off building some of the smaller vessels in the present programme in order to have started the building of four "Dreadnoughts," so as to get ahead of other Powers in this matter in a year or two. As it was it would be three years before we had three "Dreadnoughts." He thought it would have cost even less than the programme before the country. He would also like to suggest that before the Admiralty decided on the question of turbines for these ships, some information ought to be laid before the House to show the grounds on which the Government based their preference for this type of engine. It was a question very much debated by marine engineers—[Cries of "Order."] He would bow to the wishes of the House and not proceed further with the subject than to ask the Government to consider whether they were doing the right thing in regard to turbines.

Mr. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.) said he rose to support the Motion from an Irish point of view. He should like first of all to say, however, that his hon. friend who moved the Resolution had underestimated the growth of expenditure. According to evidence before the Committee on National Expenditure the amount had grown from £53,000,000 in 1883–84 to £109,000,000 in 1903–04. Out of that increase £38,000,000 were due to the Army and Navy, leaving £18,000,000 for all other services. This was to be remembered when Members were frequently told that they were responsible for increase in expenditure by pressing for outlay in different directions. All these items—many of which, small though they might be, were of vital importance to the people concerned—were but flea-bites, as an hon. Member had said, to the expenditure on the Army and Navy. Both as regarded this country and Ireland they could not leave out of sight the question of the growth of local taxation. This advanced *pari passu* with national expenditure, and the two together had become in many parts of the United Kingdom perfectly crushing. Especially was that the case in Ireland where there were boards of guardians which found it impossible to meet the most necessary demands of common decency and humanity. Allowing Sir Robert Giffen's figures of £12 per head for mere subsistence, Great Britain was left, after paying taxes, with £1,000,000,000 of money for all other purposes. If they allowed £12 per head in Ireland there was only left £15,000,000, from which they had to take £9,000,000 in taxation, leaving £6,000,000 for other purposes, compared with £1,000,000,000 in this country. It could be imagined how heavily a comparatively trifling increase of taxation weighed upon Ireland. Unhappily there were evidences on every side that Ireland was a dying nation. His hon. friend the Member for East Clare had recently obtained a very interesting Return giving monthly statistics of emigration since 1885, and it would probably surprise the House to hear that of the 30,000 emigrants who left Ireland last year Ulster sent most, namely, 10,000. In two months of the present year 10,000 people had left Irish shores. They were sometimes told that Ireland ought to rejoice in its British connection. All he could say was that to the mass of the Irish people the effect of the Union was chiefly visible in a steady increase of taxation. For the sake of the people of both countries, and for the sake of Christendom he hoped the Government would accept the Motion and take the steps suggested, with the honourable position of being the first to move in the direction of universal peace.

*__Mr. J. M. ROBERTSON__ (Northumberland, Tyneside) said the last speaker had usefully recalled the debate to a point in the Resolution which had been rather ignored by previous speakers, namely, the urgent necessity for a reduction of our military expenditure, having regard to the present social condition of the people. The hon. Member for West Donegal had drawn an impressive picture of the economic misery which Ireland suffered, and he wished to emphasise the fact that a large part of this House was profoundly concerned about the general question of a reduction of our expenditure upon armaments. He hoped they would have some assurance from the Government that they might look for some saving in the military expenditure of the country during the present year. Many of them looked to the Government to spend considerably less than their Estimates upon the Navy and Army; and if there was not a considerable saving the House and the country would feel that the promises that were given had been practically disregarded by those who gave them. He should have been more pleased if the Resolution of his hon. friend had asked the Government to return to the standard of expenditure set in 1898, for that would have been something definite to work upon. The arguments put forward by the hon. Member for King's Lynn offered no suggestion of the standard which he considered necessary. He wished to say a few words in regard to the attitude the hon. Member took up when he claimed that his studies of naval matters had given him a special insight into these problems. He would like to ask whether the mere study of the mechanics of naval warfare and maritime affairs and the relative fighting power of the different nations gave the hon. Member any special qualification for pronouncing upon the civic wisdom of such expenditure. The hon. Member for King's Lynn was no doubt an expert, and the House owed a great deal to him for the manner in which he had handled the statistics of foreign trade in the recent controversy. He wished to state that it was with no disrespect to the hon. Member that he ventured to challenge his special qualification to pronounce upon a question which was not merely one of naval strength or of the best kind of ship, but of the line upon which civilisation should go. He would remind the hon. Member that there were other naval experts who were absolutely at issue with him on naval questions, and therefore even experts could not be regarded as infallible. All the great empires that ever fell had been led to ruin by experts. He was only stating historical facts. With regard to what had been said about Holland in a recent debate by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, that country was taken by surprise because she put too much faith in the word of a faithless English king, not because of any tendency on her part to abandon her military system. No nation in European history had ever done so. All the great empires that had fallen had been ruined by internal disease and economic decline, in which senseless military expenditure had played a part. The explanation was that great military experts always seemed to lack civic judgment. From what had been said one would suppose that the Roman Empire fell for lack of military preparation and military skill; but that was not so. To the very last the empire had captains who could easily out-general those of the barbarians; but the empire fell for lack of men who could fight. It fell because the very entrails of the State were gone; and the disappearance of this source of strength was the result of eternal military strain. At one time he had a great admiration for the heroes of antiquity, and he remembered that at a tender age he translated a life of Hannibal for his own satisfaction. When he arrived at years of discretion he saw his great hero was able to fight but not able to maintain a State in peace, and he had no insight into the conditions that made an empire strong from within. It was the same with Alexander and Cæsar, for they were wreckers of civilisation, and none of them were builders up. The hon. and gallant Member for King's Lynn had told them that he detested war and deplored the necessity for armaments. They were told that by every supporter of militarism. If the hon. and gallant Member felt as some of the rest of them did, he would be glad to take the initiative in a movement for disarmament. But the hon. Gentleman and his friends refused to join in any such movement, and found something having the nature and semblance of argument for opposing it. When Mr. Gladstone in the last Liberal Administration was called upon in a similar way to take some steps towards inducing other naval Powers to reduce armaments, he answered that the time was not propitious. That answer was a matter of regret to many of his followers. No one would venture to give that answer to-day. If ever there was a propitious time it was the present. Would the naval experts give the House the reasons why we should not take the initiative now? An hon. Member opposite had said that proposals should come from the other Powers. Was it likely that other Powers, feeling themselves outnumbered, would come to us with a proposal for reduction? Surely the Power which would have the best hope of being listened to was that with the greatest naval strength. Nobody had ever proposed that we should go below even the two-Power standard. While recognising the madness of this eternal competition in armaments, we were maintaining practically a four-Power standard. We could make enormous reductions and still maintain our two-Power standard. We ought to take the initiative at the Hague Conference in striving for a proportional reduction by all nations. Our perpetually increasing naval expenditure saved us nothing from the demands of the army men for more Army expenditure. We were in the hands of experts whose one idea was, not to know what the nation could bear, but simply to create the largest mass of fighting power in each respective arm that they could plan. With Russia wiped out we found our naval experts asking for additions to the Navy, and army experts asking for additional expenditure to defend our India frontier, which Russia could not now attack if she would. Russia, who had just been overthrown by Japan, had been ruined by her experts. The same had been the case with Austria and France. Experts never had a glimpse of the necessity of retrenchment. We had had treaties of arbitration in recent years, and that was the most hopeful aspect of the foreign policy of the late Government, though Lord Lansdowne was led into a regrettable backward movement in regard to the Treaty with Japan. That Treaty had induced Japan to say to us. "You must arm more if you are to be our ally."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): She has never said that.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON said he was glad to receive that assurance. When he made the statement he was proceeding on what he had read in the public Press. We had all these arbitration treaties, and yet we were getting no advantage from them whatever in the lightening of our military burdens. What was the use of treaties of arbitration if all the while the nations were making their armaments stronger than ever? There was something in the nature of madness in all this growth of armaments. The truth was that vast vested interests had got hold of this matter; and if the cause of democracy was to go forward there must be something in the nature of a battle between democracy and those capitalist interests whose enrichment lay in the direction of the perpetual increase of armaments. The hon. and gallant Member for King's Lynn had told them that we alone among the nations thought solely of defence, and that the other nations of Europe were at all times lying in wait to attack us at a disadvantage. It was time that their discussions were delivered from these imbecilities. If there was one species of human nature which was British, and another sort for all other nations, no rational international politics would be possible. He asked the hon. and gallant Gentleman to reconsider the doctrine he had laid down about the unpreparedness of the United States for war. That was a civil war, and bad as that war was, it would have been much worse if the United States had then been armed to the teeth and had used all their forces for mutual destruction. He deprecated warmly the contention of the hon. and gallant Gentleman that the hopes of the lovers of peace depended on an Anglo-American alliance. A declaration like that would go forth to tell the French people that the *entente cordiale* was unreal, and that we were looking forward to an Anglo-American alliance which could overwhelm all the nations of Europe. The nation demanded a reduction of expenditure. If the world would spend in one year, for peace, a hundredth part of what had been spent for war in every year of the Christian era, universal peace would be visibly nearer. Government had had no difficulty in finding £220,000,000 for the abominable project of destroying two republics, but no Chancellor of the Exchequer could ever find means to pay old-age pensions. The people had at length realised that they must reverse the practice of the past and set up a policy of construction in the place of the policy of destruction.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I am not sure that the moment which the hon. Gentleman has chosen for his onslaught on armaments is very happily chosen; for, if I understand the situation, we have presented an ultimatum, the terms of which have not yet run out, to a great military power, and a large fraction of the naval forces of this country are now concentrated in the Eastern Mediterranean with the view of seeing that the rights of this country are maintained. I do not know if the hon. Gentleman thinks that we should be more likely to obtain a peaceful settlement of the controversy between this country and that Power if we had no Fleet and no Army [Labour cries of "Oh"] or a smaller Fleet and Army. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman thinks we should be more likely to bring to a peaceful solution the difficulty in which his Majesty's present advisers and the country find themselves if our naval and military forces were not in that state of preparedness which as a matter of fact they have reached. If they were not, I do not think that one could have that confidence in a peaceful solution of the controversy which I for my part look forward to, and which I have no reason to doubt, simply because our forces are in the prepared condition in which they are. The hon. Gentleman spent a great deal of his eloquence on the military experts, and he prefers what he calls experts in sociology. He thinks we ought to take experts in sociology and consult them on this question of military armaments.

*Mr. J. M. ROBERTSON: I said nothing whatever about experts in sociology.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Or at all events people who talk about sociology without being experts. I rather agree with the hon. Gentleman. I have no great confidence either in naval or military experts or in sociological experts, taken by themselves, except under the cross-examination of those who have to do with the daily work of public affairs. Whether the hon. Member approves of the policy of the late Government or not, I can assure him they did not take that policy from the opinions or *obiter dicta* of experts, but did their best to arrive at what was the real truth as to the military and naval necessities of the country. The hon. Gentleman cannot accept so extravagant an account of our work. He has a different explanation of the magnitude of the Army and Navy. He thinks it was due to the vested interests of capital in keeping up a large Army and Navy. I do not know whether that is sociology, but it strikes me as being nonsense. What possible interest have the capitalists of the country in keeping up a large Navy and Army? They have got to pay a shilling duty in income tax. I do not underrate, and I never have, the burden which these armaments throw on the country; but the burden is largely, indeed chiefly, borne by the capitalist—[An Hon. Member: The workmen.]—by the very classes who the hon. Gentleman thinks have a vested interest in maintaining the Army and Navy at a high level. If armaments have the unexpected effect of stimulating industry in all its branches, the workman benefits as well as the capitalist, and I fail to see how this is a conspiracy of the capitalists any more than of the workmen. The hypothesis of the hon. Gentleman is one which no sober thinker could conceive for a moment would govern the policy of any Administration in this country. The interest of every Administration is to cut down expenditure and to diminish taxation, and if they do not do so, it may be because they are stupid or because they do not thoroughly understand the interests of their country; but it cannot be, and never has been, except in the days of corruption and bribery, that they were animated by self-interest. There is nothing an Administration more keenly desires than a successful Budget, a large surplus, and an increasing revenue. And if naval and military expenditure grows, as it undoubtedly has in recent years, it is partly because we pay our soldiers at a much higher rate than we did before, and partly because we have had to construct permanent works for the benefit of the soldier; but in the main because it was necessary, as we believed, for the defence of the country. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down seems to think it altogether absurd that we should pose as if we framed our armaments on a defensive system alone, when we do not admit that other nations do the same. I do not wish to attack other nations, and I do not suggest that they are less patriotic or virtuous than ourselves; but is it not perfectly obvious that a great Fleet is necessary to these islands in a sense in which it is not necessary to any other nation in the world? It is necessary on purely defensive lines, and would be as necessary if it were impossible, and I believe it to be undesirable, that we should ever add another square mile to the territories we already possess. For my part, the last thing I want to see is any extension of the British Empire. I want to see its strengthening and consolidation. I want it to be unshaken in any circumstances by the fear of hostile aggression, safe not merely within the four seas, not merely Scotland, Ireland, and England, but safe in our colonial possessions and safe on the north-west frontier of India. The hon. Gentleman opposite has told us that it is folly to consider the north-west frontier, because the only country that can threaten that frontier has suffered defeat and is in the throes of a great social revolution. Has the hon. Gentleman's historical study not convinced him that nations in the throes of a great social revolution are capable at the same time of foreign aggression? The greatest wars we have known have been carried out by nations in that condition; and though I firmly believe that the last thing the Russian Government contemplates or desires is an attack on this country—I believe that the relations between Russia and England at this moment are of a most friendly description—I fail to see why we should on that account not keep ourselves in a state of preparation against conceivable contingencies of policy on the part of a great and friendly neighbour, just as Germany and France and Italy and Austria keep themselves in a state of preparation against similar contingencies.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I said that there had been extra expenditure on the Indian frontier.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not admit that. The whole question of the expenditure on the north-west frontier of India is a matter which has not been, indeed, could not have been, adequately completed by the Committee of Defence, and at this moment it is under consideration, as it was when I ceased to be a member of that body. The truth is that this country has in the main to consider two great problems. We have to maintain an Army adequate for home defence, which need not be on a very large scale, and an Army adequate for the defence of the north-west frontier of India. We ought also to have some power of military expansion which would enable us to deal with a great war, and a Fleet which would make us absolutely secure against any possible combination against our shores. Is there anything aggressive in that policy? We have to protect our coasts at home and abroad and also the great commerce which comes and goes between our home ports and our Colonial ports. If foreign nations are ready to diminish their armaments let them begin and we will follow suit. [Cries of "Oh, oh," and laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen laugh, but this is a subject upon which I really venture to think they know less than I do—of the questions of principle which govern naval considerations. I am not venturing to enter into competition with them with regard to the sociological aspect. The principle of this country has always been to watch what is being done by foreign countries, not to anticipate them, but to follow them; and foreign countries have only to diminish their fleet building, and they will find under this Government, as they would have found, I believe, under the last, that we should follow suit. But as our Fleet is for defensive purposes and their fleet is not for defensive purposes alone—["Why not?"] Because their shores are unassailable, partly for geographical reasons and partly for the reason that they have great land armies which would make invasion by any Maritime Power absolutely ludicrous and futile. Therefore their navies are not needed to defend their shores—not wholly or mainly needed to defend their shores. They are in an essentially different position from what we are; and if there is to be a diminution of armaments—which all, not merely the sociologists, must desire—it must begin with those whose armaments are kept up for purposes not merely defensive. There is no foreign nation who supposes we should invade them. Putting friendship apart, conceive as a military enterprise invading France, Germany, or Russia. Of course, you cannot; the thing is absurd; and their fleets are not maintained in order to prevent a great sea power invading their territory. That is not their purpose, and cannot be their purpose; and I would beg the hon. Gentleman before he asks us to diminish the securities of these territories to consider what is the true military and naval problem this country has to face. Whilst I agree with him that the armaments of the world might with enormous advantage be diminished, abolished if you will, that policy is one which cannot be carried out by one country; it is a policy which must be initiated by nations who, absolutely secure at home, so far as naval operations are concerned, may, if they will, diminish their fleets.

In regard to military operations, as I think our danger is not within these islands at all but on the frontier of India, there are other considerations which it would not be proper for me at this time to dwell upon. I would only ask the House to consider one more question. The hon. Gentleman said the Roman Empire sank under the amount of its military obligations. I believe that to be wholly unhistorical. I am certain that this country, at all events, heavy as the burden of its military expenditure is, is not sinking under it. On the contrary, whenever hon. Gentlemen opposite think they can make a point against my right hon. friend the Member for Birmingham, they say the country was never so flourishing, trade was never increasing by such leaps and bounds, the wealth of the individual, the well-being of the community, the prosperity of capital, and the healthy character of enterprise never were so marked. Whether all these good things be true or not, this country certainly is not sinking under its armaments. Nobody would rejoice more than I in seeing those armaments reduced; but I tell the House with all solemnity, after an experience extending now over many years, that my belief is that, if you mean to have peace in Europe, if you mean your diplomacy, while unaggressive, to be successful, if you want your Foreign Minister to carry out your negotiations with some chance of success, if you want to avoid one of those catastrophes which, in spite of great armaments, have been less frequent in recent years than they were in the days when armaments were small, not to neglect that military and naval backing without which national diplomacy is bound to fail, and national security itself may be threatened. This is the warning I give to a hostile audience, I am afraid; but I give it in all sincerity. If we, the late Government, erred by having too large armaments, we erred in the patriotic belief that those armaments were necessary. If it can be shown by the present Government, after considering all the circumstances of the case, that these armaments may be diminished, well and good. But do not in answer to abstract reasoning, based on no consideration of the real necessities of the case, plunge into a reckless course of diminishing the forces, naval and military, on which your dignity and security ultimately depend.

Sir EDWARD GREY: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City has at the end of his speech, given us some counsels of perfection which still leave me in doubt as to what view he takes of the actual Resolution before the House. His last declarations were entirely abstract declarations, with which I shall not find fault, because they were simply to the effect that you must have an adequate Army and Navy if you are to have an effective foreign policy. That ignores what to my mind is the whole point of the Resolution, which is that these things are a question of degree, and for the same reason I think it was not relevant to the particular Motion before the House to bring into the question the dispute with the Turkish Government. With regard to that question the right hon. Gentleman asked what chance we should have of bringing it to a successful conclusion if we had no Fleet and no Army. But that has nothing to do with the Resolution. He went on to say that we had every prospect of bringing that to a successful conclusion because of the efficiency of our Army and Navy at the present time; but that condition is one coming after considerable reductions in the Navy Estimates which have been made by his own Government. There have been considerable reductions in the Navy Estimates last year, yet we are able to deal satisfactorily with such an incident as that of the Egyptian frontier. Is the right hon. Gentleman able to say that the reductions which his Government made before leaving office are the only reductions that would not jeopardise the national policy of this country? Our whole policy is that national expenditure has grown enormously in the last few years and that now we have reached the turning-point and there is a prospect that the expenditure can be considerably reduced without sacrificing national safety. I admit we may not be able to do all that we wish, and the limitation must be national safety. But the particular point, and the most interesting point, I think, in this Resolution is whether it would not be possible to increase the amount of reduction which can be made, compatible with national safety, by doing all we can to influence the policy of other countries in the same direction. Well, a good deal, no doubt, does depend on the policy of other countries, and when I say the policy of other countries I mean the general feeling amongst the peoples in Europe. And I do hold that a declaration of this kind from a British House of Commons is something that is worth having, if only for the effect it may have on other Governments. It is true that in this country there is a very strong feeling in favour of reduction, but it is not in this country only; in other countries, too, the burden is felt; and anybody who reads the Press of foreign countries will see that year by year in different contries of Europe there is growing a national consciousness of the enormous burden of naval and military expenditure. That is a tendency which we welcome abroad as we welcome it amongst ourselves. I do not believe that at any time has the conscious public opinion in the various countries of Europe set more strongly in the direction of peace than at the present time, and yet the burden of military and naval expenditure goes on increasing. If it be true that that is the direction in which the conscious public opinion of the peoples is tending, that ought to be realised sooner or later in the reduction of that expenditure. When The Hague Conference meets, what will be its object? To promote peace, to diminish the horrors of war. No greater service could it do than to make the conditions of peace less expensive than they are at the present time. To all the horrors of war which are commonly known there are, no doubt, certain off-sets on the other side. You may set triumph against physical suffering, the fine qualities of courage and self-sacrifice against wounds and loss of life in war; but against the expenditure which war entails you have no set-off of that kind. That remains, after all the excitement and passion of war is over, as a heavy dead-weight pressing on the national life, lowering the standard of vitality in the country. Nowadays the expenditure in Europe on armies and navies is so great that in a sense every year we suffer that depression of national life which, though we are at peace, is in itself one of the worst conditions of war. Now, there is no more profitable task to which any such thing as The Hague Conference might aspire than to produce some such practical result of agreement amongst nations as would lead to reduction of this unproductive expenditure. It is true there are difficulties about coming to any settlement. I will not dwell on those difficulties. They are there, and they make themselves easily felt without my dilating upon them. But it was the original object of the first Hague Conference to do something to reduce expenditure, or, at any rate, to stop the increase of expenditure. The reason for doing that is not less urgent now than it was then. On the contrary, it is more urgent. It is said we are waiting upon foreign nations in order to reduce our expenditure. As a matter of fact, we are all waiting on each other. Some day or other somebody must take the first step. I think it was the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite who said that our naval policy was dictated by the building policy of other nations. I am sure that, when we are all met together at The Hague Conference, if our policy is so inter-dependent on the policy of other nations, the possibility of reducing expenditure should be one of the subjects which should be discussed. As to the Amendment which has been proposed, I would suggest, with all deference to my hon. and gallant friend, that he should not press it to a division, for this reason. The last part of his Amendment would preclude us from taking any initiative at The Hague Conference in suggesting a reduction of armaments. We ought not to be precluded in any way. Before we can say in what form the question will be brought forward, we must know the wishes and opinions of other Powers. It may be that there is some other Power ready and anxious to take the initiative; but we certainly must not be precluded from taking that initiative. We must be there to do all in our power to encourage its coming forward in the most practical form. Therefore, I cannot in any circumstances accept the last part of my hon. and gallant friend's Amendment. With regard to the first part, relating to naval supremacy, I would sugest that there never was a time when it was less necessary to insist upon that than at the present moment. I believe there never has been a time when the relative and comparative supremacy of the British Navy was greater than it is now, and that at the present moment it is at least as sure as it ever has been in our history. If that be so, surely we can, at any rate for one evening, devote our attention to pressing upon the House and upon public opinion generally, the need for economy. And, so far as the Government is concerned, though I cannot extend the promises which have been made by the Prime Minister and others of my colleagues as to specific reductions, and though what we can do with regard to The Hague Conference must depend on the response from other Governments—which in turn will depend partly on the interest which other Parliaments take in the matter—I do, on behalf of the Government, not only accept but welcome such a Resolution as this as a wholesome and beneficial expression of opinion. And just as in the time of the late Government Lord Goschen, then First Lord of the Admiralty, issued a public invitation on behalf of the Government to other countries to respond to the feeling of this country for a reduction of naval armaments, so I trust this Resolution may be taken as being an invitation from the British House of Commons to respond to their feeling in favour of encouraging a reduction of armaments.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Sir Edward Grey.

Resolved, That this House is of opinion that the growth of expenditure on armaments is excessive and ought to be reduced, such expenditure lessens national and commercial credit, intensifies the unemployed problem, reduces the resources available for social reform, and presses with exceptional severity on the industrial classes, and it therefore calls upon the Government to take drastic steps to reduce the drain on national income, and to this end to press for the inclusion of the question of the reduction of armaments by international agreement in the agenda of the forth coming Hague Conference.

MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES (ORDER IN COUNCIL).

Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, praying His Majesty to make the Order in Council under The Military Manœuvres Act, 1897, a draft of which was presented to this House on the 21st day of February last.—(*Mr. Secretary Haldane.*)

To be presented by Privy Councillors and Members of His Majesty's Household.

Adjourned at three minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 10*th May*, 1906.

Several Lords took the Oath.

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales singly took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Macclesfield and District Tramways Bill; Midland Railway Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Bury Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons, agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FEE FUND OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid on the Table the Annual Account of the Fee Fund of the House of Lords.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table, and to be referred to the Select Committee on the House of Lords Offices.

NAVY (NEW SCHEME OF TRAINING).

Reports of Departmental Committees appointed to consider certain questions concerning the extension of the new scheme of training for officers of the Navy, etc.

ARMY.

Interim Report of Anti-typhoid Inoculation Committee.

TRADE REPORT (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3582. Turkey (Aleppo).

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Return of evictions in Ireland, for the quarter ended March 31st, 1906.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

INDIA.

(Home Accounts)—Home accounts of the Government of India. (Finance and Revenue Accounts)—Finance and revenue accounts of the Government of India for the year 1904–1905. (Estimate)—Estimate of revenue and expenditure of the Government of India for the year 1905-1906, compared with the results of 1904–1905.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Rule amending the time table of examinations for the year 1906.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EDUCATION.

Petition in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools; of teachers in schools in Burnley; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

STREET BETTING BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for the suppression of betting in streets and other public places was presented by the Lord Davey; read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Monday next. (No. 79.)

POLICE (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

[SECOND READING].

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, this is a small Departmental Bill, the larger part of which has been inherited by His Majesty's Government from their predecessors. It is, therefore, largely uncontroversial, and I hope your Lordships will give it a Second Reading without difficulty. The main object of the Bill is clearly stated in the first clause. It is to give pensions to constables who continue to serve after they have qualified for a pension. The idea is that the various local authorities should be able to retain in their service experienced men who are still fit to do the work, and that their pensions should not be made subject to

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

forfeiture if during the time they serve afterwards they make some slip which might render it necessary otherwise for them to forego their pension. It is hoped by the Home Office that one result of this Bill will be to reduce the heavy burden which at present rests on the ratepayers for police pensions. To give an instance, I may state that the deficiency on the Metropolitan Police Pensions Fund which is not met by deductions from the pay was in 1894 not more than £39,000, while last year it amounted to £177,959. It is hoped that by giving a small gratuity to these policemen they will continue to serve, and that therefore the whole of the pension will not fall on the rates. The second clause makes it clear that if a constable rejoins the force after having left owing to illness or some other cause, his early service shall rank for pension. Clause 3 deals with approved service in case of Naval and Army Reservists. The other clauses are quite simple, with the exception of Clause 7 (reckoning of approved service in different forces), on which I understand it is not unlikely that one noble Lord will desire to move an Amendment in Committee. In the circumstances I think it better to defer what I have to say on that clause until we reach the Committee stage. It is hoped that the Bill will prove a considerable boon to a very deserving class of public servants, and I hope your Lordships will give it a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Earl Beauchamp.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (BUILDING BYE-LAWS) BILL [H.L.].

Order of the day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª."—(*Lord Hylton.*)

On Question, Bill read 3ª.

LORD HYLTON: My Lords, I have to move a few Amendments. They have been prepared by the Local Government Board, and I understand that the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture has expressed his assent to their being inserted in the Bill. They have been designed with the view of making the Bill more workable.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 1, line 24, after the word 'building' to insert the words 'or any part thereof.'"—(*Lord Hylton.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 7, to leave out 'Sub-section (3).'"—(*Lord Hylton.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 13, after the word 'building,' to insert the words 'and the curtilage of the building shall be deemed to be the space formed by the curtilages of the two dwelling-houses,' and to insert as a new sub-section 'Where any stables, offices, or other outbuildings are appurtenant to, or used or intended to be used in connection with, any building or any part thereof, and are within the same curtilage as that building, that building shall not be excluded from the exemption under this section by reason of being within thirty feet of any of those outbuildings, nor shall any of those outbuildings be excluded from that exemption by reason of being within thirty feet of that building or of any of the other outbuildings.'"—(*Lord Hylton.*)

On Question Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 3, page 2, line 41, after the word 'thereof' to insert the words 'or with another dwelling-house separated therefrom as mentioned in Sub-section 4 of this section; nor shall any such detached building as is lastly herein mentioned, be excluded from this exemption by reason only of its being within thirty feet of the dwelling-house in connection with which it is constructed to be used, or of another dwelling-house separated therefrom as aforesaid.'"—(*Lord Hylton.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to Order).

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I have prepared a new sub-section to Clause 4 in compliance with my promise to Lord Faber. The new sub-section differs only in a slight degree from the Amendment that he himself moved, and I hope he is satisfied with it.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 5, line 16, to leave out Sub-section (3) and to insert the following new sub-section: '(3) Any banking or insurance company or other body corporate may, by order of the Court, made on the application of any person on whose application a new trustee may be appointed, or by or under the instrument creating the trust, be appointed to be custodian trustee of any trust, with power, if the Court so order or the instrument so direct, to charge and retain or pay out of the trust property the same fees as are chargeable by the public trustee as custodian trustee, or such smaller fees as the Court or instrument may direct; and where any such appointment is made, the provisions of this section shall, subject to any directions contained in the order or instrument, apply as they apply in the case where the public trustee is appointed to be custodian trustee, except that if the court or instrument so direct, the trust property and the right to transfer or call for a transfer of shares, stock, and securities shall vest in the custodian trustee jointly with the managing trustees.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

LORD FABER: I am quite satisfied with the Amendment, and am much obliged to the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack for bringing it forward. It meets the object I had in view in my Amendment which I withdrew on the Committee stage.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The object of the next Amendment is to make perfectly clear the intention of the original clause.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out Clause 12 and to insert the following new clause: 'The provisions of this Act with respect to the High Court shall, in their application to cases within the jurisdiction of a palatine court, include that court, and the public trustee shall provide an address within the county palatine where service upon him of any proceedings under this Act in such palatine court may be effected; the rules of court relating to the exercise of the jurisdiction of a palatine court under this Act shall be made by the authority having power to make general rules and orders of that court.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The next Amendment is intended to meet the suggestion made in Committee by my noble and learned friend Lord Ashbourne. By this Amendment it will be for the Lord Chancellor, with the concurrence of the Treasury, to provide for the establishment and regulation of any branch office where he thinks it necessary. It was not intended that this power should rest with the public trustee.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 15, page 12, line 13, to leave out the words 'by the public trustee.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The object of my last Amendment is to make it clear that rules may be made for excluding any particular kind of trust from the operation of the Act.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 15, page 12, line 14, after the word 'office' to insert the following new paragraph: '(*e*) Excluding any trusts from the operation of this Act or any part thereof.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to. Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow; and to be printed as amended. (No. 81.)

ALIENS BILL.

Brought from the Commons, and read 1ª, and to be printed. (No. 80.)

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

SOLICITORS BILL [H.L.]

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

COTTON CULTIVATION.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH rose to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the Government had given the British Cotton-Growing Association any facilities for the development of the growth of cotton in the British Empire, and to move for Papers. The noble Duke said: My Lords, I am afraid it is not very often that I find myself in agreement with the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the administration of Colonial matters, but I rather hope that on the present occasion in regard to the matter which I venture to bring before the notice of your Lordships, although I do not expect to be in entire agreement with the noble Earl, I may receive from him some attention to the views which I shall express and also some consideration in the reply which he will give me. I am anxious to ask the noble Earl whether His Majesty's Government are prepared to support and to give their sympathetic consideration to the aims of the British Cotton-Growing Association. Furthermore, I wish to ask the noble Earl whether His Majesty's Government intend to follow the policy of their predecessors and do all in their power to develop cotton-growing in the West Indies, and in West Africa, and whether they will consider seriously the possibility of the development of railway construction in Northern Nigeria.

But before I venture to put these Questions to the noble Earl I should like to remind your Lordships of the causes which led to the creation of the British Cotton-Growing Association. As your Lordships are aware, the great industry in Lancashire is nearly entirely dependent for the supply of the raw material of cotton on the United States of America. It is difficult to ascertain the exact amount of cotton produced and consumed throughout the world in any one year; but this I can say, without fear of contradiction, that although the amount of cotton produced in America is larger every year, the tendency is for the ratio between consumption and production to be greater in the case of consumption. Moreover, when we bear in mind that the population of the United States is largely increasing, that they are employing more cotton every year themselves, it is evident that the amount of cotton available for the Lancashire market is becoming less and less every year. The consequence is that the price has a tendency to rise. The noble Earl is well aware that the greatest amount of our cotton trade is conducted in the East, and he must in those years in which he administered the Indian Empire have seen that the natives in India could only afford to buy our cotton goods when they were at the cheapest price possible. It is perfectly clear that a rise in the price of cotton would increase the cost of articles, and the tendency would be for our Eastern trade to diminish.

There is a further danger. A reduction in the supply of the raw material of cotton would be serious, but together with a bad harvest in America the result would be positively dangerous to Lancashire. When there is a bad harvest the supply is curtailed, and consequently gambling is promoted and speculation in the cotton crop takes place. The speculation has this effect, that the price of cotton in a very few years varies between 20 and 70 per cent. The result is that would-be purchasers do not dare to buy. The manufacturer consequently has to employ the stock which he possesses, to work either short time, or shut down his mill altogether. I daresay there are some noble Lords in this House who remember well the evil effect upon the population of Lancashire during the time of the cotton famine. I do not think I need dwell upon the terrible suffering which took place at that time, but the effect upon the population of Lancashire of having to work short time is similar to the grave effects which were associated with the cotton famine. Working short time in Lancashire is a sort of echo of those gloomy and terrible days. The loss to the wage-earning class is something like £300,000 a week, or a total of about £15,000,000 a year.

Your Lordships are aware that the cotton industry, after agriculture, is the biggest industry in this country. It employs some 3,000,000 operatives directly, and 10,000,000 of our population are indirectly associated with the cotton industry. The total value of the exports of cotton amount to between £80,000,000 and £90,000,000 a year. Yet this great industry, this industry which is so indissolubly connected with the prosperity of Great Britain, depends entirely for its future upon the goodwill and consideration of a foreign though friendly Power.

There is only one remedy that we know of for getting rid of this fear as to the shortage of raw material in the future, and that is to multiply the sources of supply throughout the world, so that it will be impossible in the future for any combination of gamblers to corner the cotton crop and make the prices so fluctuate that the industry in Lancashire is jeopardised or brought to the verge of ruin. So far, I think, I shall be in agreement with the views of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies; but I should like to go one step further, and say that, since we are all agreed that the sources of supply should be multiplied, I for my part would sooner see those supplies produced within the confines of the British Empire than in any other part of the world.

The British Cotton Growing Association was formed for this very purpose. The late Government gave it support and sympathetic help. We did so from a Colonial Office point of view because, in the first place, we recognised that we had many tracts of territory in our Colonies and protectorates which were undeveloped and required to be developed. We knew that the production of cotton would be a source of benefit to the natives; it would give them healthy as well as remunerative employment. We furthermore believed that we should give a sympathetic support to those who represented a great staple industry, so that it could not be claimed that lack of interest on our part had been prejudicial to the industry, and that it had suffered from lack of foresight or care on the part of His Majesty's advisers.

I am not at all certain that the Party to which noble Lords opposite belong hold similar views with regard to our great staple industries. I know that on many occasions they have expressed views on this particular matter which do not in the least coincide with the views of the Unionist Party. Frequently it has been stated on platforms that if one industry failed the members of it might perfectly well turn their attention to some other industry. If one industry, through either economic or industrial causes, failed, what did it matter? Those employed in it could perfectly well turn their attention to some other industry which would be of more value. As an example of what I am saying, I cannot do better than quote the words which the present President of the Board of Trade made use of one or two years ago. Talking about the industries of this country, he said—

> "For one trade they lost they simply substituted another and a better one. They might have lost the puddlers, but it meant they were giving employment to engineers and those who obtained better wages. They simply substituted a higher-class trade that paid better. They had lost sugar refining, which did not require much skill."

Speeches similar in strain to that have been frequently delivered by members of the Party to which noble Lords opposite belong. What I want to know from the noble Earl is whether he will, in approaching this question of supporting, safeguarding, and protecting the future welfare and prosperity of the great cotton trade, ignore and place on one side the extreme economic views which I know his party hold, and which, if driven to their logical conclusion, would mean that the Government could not show any sympathetic regard or consideration for possible damage or injury which might affect the cotton trade in the future, but that if the people in the cotton trade could no longer get their raw material they must turn their attention to some other industry which would be more profitable to them and to the world at large.

I submit to the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies that the production of cotton for England is a national matter. It is associated with the second greatest staple industry in this country, and consequently the Government of the day are bound to give it their sympathetic support and consideration, and cannot afford to ignore how indissolubly it is connected with those other subsidiary industries which depend so largely on its prosperity and success. Therefore, I am anxious to hear from the noble Earl whether, in approaching this question of safeguarding the interests of Lancashire in the future, he will do so in the spirit of recognising the importance of a staple industry in this country.

It is perfectly true that the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies has said in the last few weeks that the British Cotton Growing Association has his sympathy, and incidentally he alluded to the fact that the noble Earl's views were in accordance with his own. I was very pleased to read that statement, but I confess I should have more confidence if we could get a definite expression of opinion from the Secretary of State himself, for, after all, he is supreme. His views are represented in the Cabinet, and I should have a feeling of greater confidence if I could hear from his own lips his ideas upon this very important matter. He has, if I may venture to say so, in this particular matter somewhat delegated his authority to his very distinguished subordinate. I more readily recognise the ability of his official subordinate than that it is his duty continually, both in the House of Commons and in the country, to convey to the public the colonial policy of His Majesty's Government.

The Under-Secretary for the Colonies has told us what the British Cotton Growing Association has done in the last three years. He has told us that in 1903 the value of cotton grown by them amounted to only £29,000, but that for this year the estimated crop amounts to no less a figure than £330,000. I cannot help feeling that those who are interested in the industrial development of this country, and, in particular, in the maintenance of the cotton industry of Lancashire, are indebted to the master spinners and operatives for their courage, their foresight, and their patriotic endeavour to establish cotton growing within the confines of the British Empire. Further, I think that the great efforts which they have made—efforts of self-denial in a way, because they are doing this, not for themselves, but for their children who come after them—deserve the sympathetic consideration and support of His Majesty's Government, and I shall be very glad to know whether or not I am right in assuming that they will receive it.

I want also to ask the noble Earl whether he intends to give every assistance to the development of cotton growing in the West Indies. I know that when it was a question of supporting and maintaining the sugar industry there, members of his Party displayed very little concern and very little interest. Indeed, we were frequently reminded that we were merely bolstering up an industry of the West Indies at the expense of those who lived in this country. I do not expect noble Lords opposite to show any great interest in the sugar industry of the West Indies, although I might incidentally observe that, as a result of the policy of the late Government, the sugar industry there is now in a flourishing condition. Are you going to pursue a policy of consideration towards those who are developing the cotton industry in the West Indies, or are you going to regard it in the same light as the sugar industry?

I turn now to West Africa. I desire to ask the noble Earl whether the grants which, on the advice of the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Protectorates in West Africa made to the British Cotton Growing Association are to be continued in the future or not. There was a grant from Sierra Leone of £1,500 a year towards the Association, Lagos gave them £2,000, and Southern Nigeria £3,000 a year. Will they be continued? Does the noble Earl think these grants, which were given on the advice of the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, reasonable or proper ones, and is he prepared to recommend that they should be continued? Again, what has been done with regard to reducing the cost of transit on the railways in West Africa? Has anything at all been decided with regard to the rate of freight on the ships which bring the goods from West Africa to the port of Liverpool?

In alluding to the question of transport and the facilities both with regard to railways and shipping, I am irresistibly drawn to the consideration of a few points brought out very strongly in a Parliamentary Paper entitled "Correspondence relating to Railway Construction in Nigeria" (Cd. 2787). I have no hesitation in referring to this Blue-book, because I informed the noble Earl the other day that in the course of my remarks I should feel it my duty to do so. Every one who is qualified to judge claims that in Northern Nigeria, which is a territory as big as France and Italy put together, it is possible to grow an ample supply of cotton, a supply so large that it would adequately supplement the shortage which we anticipate in the crop in the future from America. The natives of Nigeria are accustomed to growing cotton, the master spinners of Lancashire are prepared to sink large sums of money in that territory for cotton growing; but there is one thing lacking, namely, proper transit. Railway construction is in its infancy, and until something is done in this direction the possibilities of growing cotton in this region are speculative and cannot be realised for an indefined period.

With regard to railway construction in Nigeria, there was, as I have said, a Blue-book published on this very important matter; and without desiring to take up too much of your time I should like briefly to refer to two schemes suggested. One scheme is that the heavy, broad-gauge railway, costing £7,000 a mile, should be extended. That would be a very expensive railway, costing several millions to construct, and those who have expressed opinions regarding it say that there is no possibility of its being carried into effect until the Imperial Government have a sum of £10,000,000 or £15,000,000 at their disposal. Therefore, I think we may put the possibility of constructing that railway on one side. But there is an alternative scheme, the one recommended by the present Governor of Nigeria, Sir Frederick Lugard. The scheme involves an outlay of £1,500 a mile, and the total cost of the railway would be about £600,000. This railway would connect up towns like Zaria, Kano, Zungeru, and Lokoja, and the advantages of this scheme would be that you would not be competing against the transport facilities on the Niger, but would be supplementing and accelerating them. Sir Frederick Lugard says—

> "The French are pushing forward their line from Dahomey to Saye with great rapidity, with the avowed intention of capturing the trade of the Haussa States. . . . The necessity for a means of transport for the supply of garrisons and administrative staff, at once cheaper and more certain than existing methods, is very urgent."

I now come to a passage in the Report of Sir Frederick Lugard to which I attach very great importance. Sir Frederick says—

> "The Government of Northern Nigeria will have already spent enormous sums in archaic methods of transport, and should a difficulty with France overtake us in the interval we should certainly be unable to maintain our position in the northern states. I have naturally a keen desire to see this country self-supporting, to decrease the huge transport bill, and to increase the revenue-producing exports. I am convinced that the only method of doing this is by the rapid construction of a light surface line on a two-foot six-inch gauge, connecting the Lower Niger with Kano, or at least with Zaria, which is the central point from which the lines both of commerce and administration diverge."

Sir Frederick further says—

> "There are no serious obstacles by the route selected, and though no precise estimate o cost can be made until after the location survey is complete, it may with tolerable safety be said that it will not exceed £1,570 per mile, or a total of £410,000."

I need not dwell on the great qualities of Sir Frederick Lugard. They are well known to every noble Lord in this House. When I was Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office he enjoyed our complete confidence. We recognised in him not only a great soldier but a great statesman in dealing with natives, and also a great administrator. I am assured that he holds precisely similar views to-day to those expressed in the extract which I have read. He does not take back one single word from the opinion he expressed to Mr. Chamberlain three years ago. What I am anxious to ascertain from the noble Earl the Secretary of State is whether he has had sufficient time to go into this problem of the development of railways in Nigeria.

The noble Earl the other night, at some political banquet which he attended, dwelt eloquently upon the importance of trusting the man on the spot. What I desire to impress upon the noble Earl is that Sir Frederick Lugard might be trusted on this particular occasion. There is no just reason for supposing that the views he has expressed, and which he has had the opportunity of revising after several years, are unsound and, therefore, that they do not deserve every consideration at the hands of His Majesty's Government. I suppose the noble Earl will remind me that this scheme of railway development will cost money, and that the Imperial Government as it is grants £300,000 a year to Nigeria for the administration of that territory, and he will consequently say that it is very difficult to increase that grant. I myself dislike calling upon the tax-payer for any fresh sums of money, and I certainly dislike advising or counselling it when the Party in power is the one to which noble Lords opposite belong, because we know, if there is any deficiency in the Imperial Budget, on which portion of his Majesty's population the making good of that deficiency will fall. At the same time I wish to impress on the noble Earl that we are now spending £300,000 a year as an Imperial grant on Nigeria, and that the money which the taxpayers now give for the administration of that country is totally unproductive. There is not the slightest possibility or chance that this money can ever be in any way productive; it is a dead loss. What I desire to urge is that instead of spending £300,000 a year with no chance of ever getting any return, it would be more economical, both from an Imperial and also from a local point of view, that the grant should be increased to, say, £425,000 a year, adding to the grant already given the £125,000 a year which Sir Frederick Lugard requires for the construction of his railway for a period of four years. You could either make your grant in that manner, or it would be possible to raise the full amount and charge the interest thereof to the Imperial grant which is given every year. That is a matter, however, on which I do not desire to express an opinion, as it is one for financial experts; but the important point is that it would be cheaper in the long run to add to the present grant and construct the railways. You would then know that in the course of a few years there would be some return for the expenditure you had been called upon to make.

If you construct the railway which Sir Frederick Lugard suggests, you in the first place open up the country. Its taxable resources will multiply, and consequently your revenue will increase. You will also reduce the cost of sending provisions to outlying military posts. These provisions have now to be carried on the heads of natives over thousands of miles. The cost of that will be reduced, according to Sir Frederick Lugard, by £30,000, and you will call into being the great cotton fields which undoubtedly exist there, in which Lancashire is willing to invest large sums of money, and the produce of which will help to remunerate the native and make his position more comfortable and his lot more contented. You will also be enabled to bring the raw material into the Liverpool market at a price less than the average price of cotton for the last ten years.

I hope the noble Earl will see fit to give me an answer on the points which I have ventured to bring to his notice. I do not mean a cursory and official answer, but one based upon a careful study of this question. If he will do that I can assure him that it will not only give considerable pleasure to many noble Lords in this House, but that everyone in Lancashire who is deeply concerned in the production of the raw material of cotton will be greatly relieved to see that the noble Earl has given his careful attention to this very important matter. I hope he does not think that I have brought forward this subject out of a feeling of idle curiosity or senseless inquisitiveness. I have done it because I know, from considerable experience among operatives and those connected with the cotton trade in Lancashire, that they are vitally interested in the future welfare of their industry, and that they do look to His Majesty's present advisers to give them support and consideration in the work they are now carrying out. When the noble Earl reflects how indissolubly this industry is connected with many similar industries in this country, I think he will realise that it is of the greatest importance that the Government should give every consideration and support to the efforts which are now being made to place it for all time on a permanent basis.

THE EARL OF SCARBOROUGH: My Lords, before the noble Earl replies to the questions which have been put to him by my noble friend, perhaps I may be allowed to say a few words on the subject of the development of railways in Northern Nigeria, to which my noble friend directed the latter part of his remarks. For a number of years prior to 1900, when that country was taken over by the Crown, I was associated with Nigeria from an administrative point of view, and I have been associated with it also from the point of view of its commercial development; and, although I agree that it may be a wise policy for the Imperial Government to spend money in building railways in that country in order to hasten development for the sake of posterity, in my humble opinion I do not think there is any justification for it at present from the trade point of view, even if it were possible for the Protectorate to be called upon to pay any of the cost either of construction or maintenance.

If there was a sudden discovery of valuable minerals on a large scale that would, of course, alter the complexion of affairs a great deal, but the condition of Northern Nigeria to-day is such that I can only describe it as poverty stricken and to a large extent depopulated. Years of slave raiding have devastated and practically laid waste the country, and, moreover, it suffers periodically from famine, no doubt partly due to the perpetual state of unrest in which the people exist. Nevertheless, I am fully convinced that the country has great future possibilities, but it is necessary for the population to double or treble itself before its resources can be properly developed. Your Lordships will remember that this country has been effectively occupied for barely five years. It needs rest and time, and, if I may venture to say so, a little less feverish haste in regard to the pursuit of revenue and very delicate handling as regards internal taxation.

The noble Duke referred to the subject of cotton growing in Northern Nigeria. It is a subject in which he takes a deep interest, and I think that sooner or later Lancashire will be very grateful to him for it. But before thinking about spending money on heavy railways for bringing down cotton from the interior of the country, which for years to come may not grow cheaply enough to pay the cost of carriage, we should see what could be done with the thousands of acres of suitable land bordering on the River Niger, both in Northern and Southern Nigeria, which could be developed for the purpose of cotton growing. The British Cotton Growing Association have made an excellent start in this direction. The natives have been encouraged in every way possible to grow cotton beyond their own requirements in order to export home, so that, although I do not altogether agree with my noble friend as regards railway development from the point of view of trade being urgent at the present time, I do thoroughly agree with him on other grounds.

I am convinced that a rapidly-constructed light railway is urgently required in Northern Nigeria for strategical purposes; that is to say, for internal defence, for movement of troops, and for economy of administration. I think myself that such construction would be a very wise insurance from the point of view of the British taxpayer. The position of Northern Nigeria to-day is not unlike the position of the equatorial provinces of Egypt at the time of the Mahdi. We have residents with small garrisons scattered all over the country, a country, as the noble Duke said, as large as France and Italy put together, in the midst of a fanatical population and with absolutely no means of communication. I know of only one road in the whole of Northern Nigeria on which wheel transport can be used, and that only in the dry season. I happened to be in that country during the recent rising. Fortunately it was only local, but it afforded an instance of what may happen on a larger scale any day. The nearest reinforcements had to walk over 300 miles to reach the scene of the rising and the bulk of the troops at Sir Frederick Lugard's command were over 600 miles distant. These distances were covered in remarkably short time, but I think your Lordships will appreciate the dangers of such delay in emergencies of this kind.

I assume that His Majesty's Government must be alive to the position of affairs which I have attempted to describe. I am confident that Sir Frederick Lugard—and by the way, His Majesty's Government have no more able and experienced administrator in their service—must have pointed out clearly the situation. I do venture to urge on the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies the great risk this country is running in that corner of the Empire until rapid means of communication are established such as a system of light railways would supply, and I sincerely hope that this urgent need of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria will receive their urgent consideration.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN): My Lords, I did not expect any apology from the noble Duke for bringing this matter before the House, and my only regret is that he thought it necessary in his opening remarks to introduce what I cannot help thinking was rather an unnecessarily discordant note in his reference to what he characterised as "extreme economic views" in the Party to which I have the honour to belong. We are dealing to-day with a specific question in regard to the work of the British Cotton Growing Association. I have before me the first annual report of that association, and I find from it that they express their obligation to the noble Duke for the great assistance which he, on behalf of the Colonial Office, gave to the work of the Association when he was Under-Secretary. I venture to think that it is highly probable that in the next report the Association will be able to pay a similar compliment to the noble Duke's relative who has succeeded him in the office he then held.

So far as the work of this association is concerned, I cannot help thinking that there is no possible reason for difference of opinion between the two sides of the House. We admit quite as fully as noble Lords opposite the necessity of providing larger supplies for our great cotton industry, and I see no reason whatever why we on this side of the House should not also as cordially as noble Lords opposite desire to find those supplies within the British Empire. These are the objects which the British Cotton Growing Association, as I understand, were formed to promote, and which the noble Duke, while he was at the Colonial Office, helped them in promoting; and so far as I am concerned, understood in that way, I am quite prepared to adopt the policy of my predecessors and assist the British Cotton Growing Association in the same way and to the same extent, and do more, if possible, than they did.

At home, under the noble Duke's auspices, conferences were held monthly at the Colonial Office. Those conferences are being continued with Mr. Churchill's assistance. In the Colonies they did all they could, I have no doubt, to encourage the Colonial Government to assist in the same work, and those methods we also are pursuing. I have had the opportunity of meeting lately several Governors who have returned from the Colonies, and one of the first questions I put to them was as to how the work in the direction of promoting the growing of cotton was progressing in any case in which that question would apply. There are many parts of the British Empire in which there are tracts suitable for the growth of cotton. The noble Duke referred especially to two, the West Indies and West Africa, which have, no doubt, attracted most attention.

In regard to the West Indies, the noble Duke knows very well what the Colonial Office have done and are still doing. They have a Department of Agriculture in the West Indies under Sir D. Morris, who has done everything in his power to induce the planters to take up the growing of cotton, to bring in seed from the United States, and to attend to the proper cultivation of the crops, and the results have been satisfactory. I ought not to omit to mention, because I wish to do full justice to the association, that they co-operated by making arrangements for the provision of machinery, and thereby rendered it easy for those in the Colonies to take up the industry. The result in the West Indies has been satisfactory. I do not think the noble Duke quoted the figures, but the number of bales in 1902 was 680, and in 1905 the number was 5,000, and their value £150,000. Besides that, the quality was excellent, and I find that the West Indian cotton sold at from 2d. to 3d. above the best American cotton. Therefore I think the Colonial Office have done everything possible to help forward the growth of cotton in the West Indies.

Then I come to West Africa. The noble Duke asked me whether we were going to continue the grants. We have no intention whatever of throwing any obstacles in the way. The grants depend to some extent on the action of the local governments, but I have no reason to suppose they wish to withdraw them, and we shall certainly do everything we can to support their continuance. I do not think we can at present say with any exactitude what the results are in that part of the world. They are a good deal in the future; but I will quote one figure to show a progress very similar to that of the West Indies. I find that in Lagos the increase in the number of bales since 1902 has been from 250 bales to 5,000 bales.

I should like to remind the noble Duke of another sphere in which we have not been inactive, and which I do not think he referred to. I do not know if many of your Lordships have made acquaintance with the Scientific Department of the Imperial Institute, but I can say that if anyone would pay even a hurried visit to that institution he would find that investigations are going on there into many subjects which bear upon the commercial future of the Colonies, investigations into minerals and other products, and more especially, under the direction, I think, of the Government to which the noble Duke belonged, into the question of cotton growing. The work of the Scientific Department certainly confirms the view of the value of West Africa, and perhaps I should say especially of Northern Nigeria, in this matter. I find in the Report of the British Cotton Growing Association that it is said that their representatives give the most enthusiastic reports about the capabilities of the country, and one gentleman stated that some of the districts had the best cotton growing land he had ever seen.

I also read in the report that Northern Nigeria has a population of over 10,000,000 and an area of 323,000 square miles, which is equal to one-half of the cotton-producing States of North America. I think the experts in the Scientific Department entirely agree in their estimate of the great future, with regard to cotton cultivation, that is before Northern Nigeria. They think that the climate there is exceedingly suitable, and it is to be remembered that the cultivation of cotton is no new thing, but has been carried on there for generations. The sample at present, I understand, is not of the highest, but it is believed that, by careful cultivation, this may be easily remedied. I hope I have said enough to show the noble Duke that I am not unsympathetic with regard to the work of the Cotton Growing Association.

I pass now to the question of communications in West Africa. I am not prepared to deal with rates of railways or freights of ships. There was nothing in the noble Duke's question which gave me any idea that information on that matter would be asked, and I would prefer to treat it as a separate matter. With regard to railways, however, there is just one reservation which I think I ought to make, and it is that I cannot accept any responsibility in the meantime as to the way in which any proposals ought to be dealt with from the point of view of finance. They have not reached a shape yet in which they could be put before the Department of the Government which is responsible in these matters, and it would not be proper for me to enter into a discussion until my colleagues who are responsible in that respect have had the proposals before them and given their opinion. But I do not quite agree with the noble Duke that nothing has been done since 1903.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: The noble Earl must have misunderstood me. I did not say that nothing had been done since 1903. I stated that the quotation which I read from the despatch of Sir Frederick Lugard was dated 1903.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: Since 1903 there has been a survey, which was gone into at great length under experienced engineers. I will refer to that later. I cannot, as I say, pledge myself to a specific plan or enter into the question of finance, but I do not see why I should be debarred from giving my opinion frankly on the Papers before me. In dealing with railways, as the noble Marquess opposite will remember from his Indian experience, as I do from mine, we always at once come into conflict between

State construction and construction by private enterprise. Indian experience has gone in both directions, but I think the accepted view there now is—at least it was when I came away—that on the whole the best thing for the country is that the ownership of the lines should be in the hands of the Government, but the working of them in the hands of companies. It is sometimes difficult to bring that about, but if we look to private enterprise in a matter of this kind we have, of course, either to support it by some form of guarantee, of which we have had grievous experience, or we must support it, as has been done pretty frequently in other parts of Africa lately, by land grants, to which also there are considerable objections.

In dealing with railway communication in this part of West Africa I think it is generally agreed that eventually there will have to be two main lines, one in the eastern part of the territory and one in the western. We need not discuss the one in the eastern part at present, as the country is not ready for it, but I may mention that it would have one great advantage—namely, that it would lead down to one of the best possible harbours at Old Calabar. With regard to the western system there is not quite the same advantage. The natural port for a main line opening out the country from the coast to the west would be Lagos, but there is this difficulty with regard to the port of Lagos, that it has a bar which necessitates transhipment of goods. Steamers cannot go within it. Works to get over the difficulty in the ordinary way by running out moles would cost a very large sum of money and would take much time. But it has been suggested, and we are on the point, I hope, of agreeing to the project, that we should try the effect of what is called sand pump suction dredging, and it is hoped by that means the bar may be removed at very much less cost and in much less time.

An alternative is to carry the line to a point lower down in Southern Nigeria at Warri or Sapele, but the difficulty there is that there is no large town as at Lagos, and there is considerable doubt as to the healthiness of the situation. The arguments against making a new port at Warri or Sapele were well summed up by Sir Frederick Lugard in the following passage—

> "Were the construction of the railway from the coast under discussion *ab initio*, there would, doubtless, be strong arguments for the selection of a port on which little expenditure would be needed, such as Warri or Sapele, where there is no bar, and ocean-going vessels can find sufficient water at all times. But even in that case it would have to be considered whether these ports were sufficiently healthy, whether they afforded sufficient room for the expansion of a large township, and it would have to be noted that the railway would not run through a country so densely populated, or through so industrious a population as in the Lagos Protectorate, and that, instead of starting from a great trade centre like Lagos, everything would have to be created *de novo* at its sea port."

In that view I humbly concur. Granted that Lagos is to be the port, subject to certain details, there is not much difference ence of opinion as to the general route which would be followed up to the Niger and across the Niger to Zaria and Kano.

I come then to the proposal specifically referred to by the noble Duke which was made by Sir Frederick Lugard in 1903, and I am sure that noble Lords will believe, from the reference to that distinguished officer which I made, that I have the greatest respect for his opinion as the man on the spot. In this connection I should like to be allowed to refer in one word to a report which I understand has been current that Sir Frederick Lugard had been recalled. I think that is an extraordinary idea to have got abroad. As a matter of fact, it is entirely and absolutely without foundation. I may tell your Lordships exactly what has happened. I ascertained that for certain reasons Sir Frederick Lugard would like to come home. I was very anxious to see him in order to have an opportunity of considering with him the problems of this region, and, after all, it is a very good thing to have a personal acquaintance with the man on the spot. I therefore suggested to Sir Frederick Lugard that he should have special leave of three months during this summer in order to enable him to come home.

I wish to treat this proposal of Sir Frederick Lugard with all possible respect, but I would ask noble Lords to consider what is meant by laying down light railways and laying them down rapidly. I can understand light railways of the kind suggested being exceedingly useful in dealing with prairie country or a veldt, where you can lay the sleepers and the rails practically on the ground. I can understand a light railway also being essential when you have to deal with very mountainous country, and I realise that a light railway would be advisable where one had to look forward to small traffic. But a light railway is not the most expedient or the most economical mode of construction where there are considerable works required; and in this case, since Sir Frederick Lugard's proposal was made, we have had a survey, to which the distinguished name of Sir Benjamin Baker is attached, and we find that he estimates that a 2 feet 6 inch temporary railway would cost £1,700,000, and not £562,000 as was estimated.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: What page in the Blue-book are you quoting from?

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: Page 135. A 3 feet 6 inch standard gauge railway would, it is estimated, cost £2,300,000, a difference of £600,000, which, though considerable, is not excessive. I would like to point out, in passing, that the noble Duke spoke of the Lagos railway as a heavy railway. The Lagos railway is a 3 feet 6 inch railway, but it is not of a heavy type. I do not suppose that Sir Frederick Lugard has had any special training in railway surveying, and so, with all respect to him, I think I am justified in preferring the estimate put before us by the regular consulting engineers, and in thinking that it might not be an economic process to lay down a temporary 2 feet 6 inch line in place of carrying on the 3 feet 6 inch gauge, if that is at all possible.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Sir Frederick Lugard was supported in his views by Mr. Eaglesome, a very distinguished engineer, who, although he cannot, of course, be compared with Sir Benjamin Baker, is undoubtedly an expert and a gentleman in whose opinion we can place some confidence.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I do not wish to say anything about Mr. Eaglesome, of whom I have no personal knowledge, but it is stated in the Papers that he had had some experience in India in a somewhat subordinate capacity. There is one other matter with regard to this temporary 2 feet 6 inch line to which I would like to call attention. It is that by constructing it we should establish or at any rate, run the risk of, another difficulty. The noble Marquess will remember the battle of the gauges. If there is any thing more undesirable than another in the development of a country I am convinced that it is to introduce, if you can possibly avoid it, two systems of gauge.

No doubt, from the point of view of rapidity of construction, Sir Frederick Lugard's proposal has advantages, but his proposal deals only with a line from the upper bank of the Niger to Kano. What would that mean as regards the development of the cotton industry? It would mean that everything would be brought down to the Niger and then be conveyed by the river. If the river were the same at all times of the year that might be a very excellent mode of transit, and I often think that in these days of railways sufficient attention is not paid to the use we might make of rivers. But in this particular instance I think it would be rather a dangerous experiment. The depth of the Niger varies very much, and though for two months in the years ships drawing ten or twelve feet of water could get up to the point at which Sir Frederick Lugard's line would reach the river, for eight months there is a maximum depth of three and a half feet, and for two months it falls to much less. So that unless the cotton trade were very carefully manœuvred to come within two months there would be something like an *impasse*.

As I have said, I am not speaking of any plan officially adopted. I only wish to respond to the noble Duke by giving him frankly and freely the view I have formed after very carefully reading the Papers. I confess that, from my reading of them, I think the best development of this kind, particularly with a view of reaching the cotton-growing fields of Nigeria—if we have any faith in the belief that these fields will result in very large trade—would be to push on as rapidly as possible from the base the system of railway already begun. There is, as I have said, no real difference of opinion as to the route, and the line might gradually be pushed on from the point it has reached now to the Niger, crossing the ver, not necessarily in the first place by an expensive bridge, possibly by a steam ferry, and continuing along the route Sir Frederick Lugard has advocated.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: How many years does the noble Earl estimate that would take?

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: That is asking me to go into an engineering detail, which I am not able to do. It depends on how much money is provided.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: It has been stated that it will take fifteen years, or more.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: If the noble Duke will further study the Papers he will find that a seven years scheme is drawn out. There is no reason why the thing should not be pushed forward if the money were available and there was real reason for pushing it on at greater speed. No doubt the most economical way would be to push it on in sections from the base. It is true, as has been said in regard to the financial position, that Northern Nigeria has to come to the British Treasury for a large portion of the expenses of the administration of the Protectorate, and for my part I do not hesitate to say that, if this industry has really the possibilities which I for one think it has, a very good argument to put before the Government is that the best way of making this Protectorate self-supporting would be to assist it in obtaining the railway connection without which the large trade we may hope to look forward to cannot be realised.

AUSTRALIAN NAVIGATION COMMISSION.

*LORD ELLENBOROUGH rose to ask His Majesty's Government if their attention had been called to the "Report of the Federal Commission on the Navigation Bill," a summary of which appeared in *The Times* of the 26th April, and if they would cause the whole of that Report to be printed, and issued as a Parliamentary Paper; and also to inquire of them if they were in possession of the evidence upon which that Report was based; and, if not, whether they would cable to Australia for a copy of that evidence, so that if thought desirable they could reprint and distribute as a Parliamentary Paper such portions of it as were of general and not merely of local interest. The noble Lord said: My Lords, In the summary of the Report as it appeared in *The Times* of the 26th of April, there are forty-five findings or recommendations. I intend to refer to only the first seven of these, and mean to do so as briefly as possible. I shall, however, take the opportunity of remarking that the Report appears to me to concern the Board of Trade more nearly than the Colonial Office. The first of these findings says that the number of British seamen employed on British ships is declining, and that this is chiefly due to their unfavourable surroundings. Your Lordships will recollect that a great deal of evidence to this effect was lately given before a Departmental Committee of the Board of Trade, which reported in 1903.

The first recommendation of this Commission refers to the housing of the seamen, and recommends that they should be entitled to 120 cubic feet of air space per man. According to Section 210 of Merchant Shipping Act of 1894, 72 cubic feet is the minimum of space for the seaman, and in this confined space he has to keep all his personal property. But according to paragraph 107 of the Regulations for the Army Medical Services a soldier is entitled to 600 cubic feet when in barracks, 500 cubic feet when in huts, and to a great deal more when in hospital. Will your Lordships consider for a moment what 72 cubic feet of space actually means? It is 2 feet broad, 6 feet long, and 6 feet high. This is the seaman's or the fireman's bedroom, dining room, dressing room, his sole living room, and in it he has to keep all his belongings. Surely 120 cubic feet is not too much for these purposes.

The next recommendation is that this small space should be properly ventilated—a very humble request. The third suggestion is that bath-rooms supplied with hot water should be available on steamships for engineers, firemen and others, when coming off duty. This may sound luxurious, but it is a necessity of health that men on leaving stoke-hole work should be able to cleanse themselves properly. Coal dust, when mixed with perspiration, grease and oil, cannot be got rid of without hot water. Men should not have to go to the small sleeping places I have referred to while still smothered in dirt. Who wants a chimney sweep coming off work in the dress of his calling as a fellow-passenger in a sleeping-car? Yet the sweep is by far the cleaner of the two, as he is merely a carboniferous creature and has nothing to do with oleaginous matters. A horse coming in from hunting is always given a good rub down, and a stoker is quite as much in need of similar treatment. All the better class of steamers have bath rooms already.

The next sections say that the men's quarters should be adequately lighted, that cooks should be certificated, that an improved scale of provisioning should be adopted, and that ships' victualling bills should be liable to examination. The Report also states that—

> "To obtain good work it has always been found profitable by shrewd employers to supply good food to their employees."

An owner gets back the value of his money if he gives plenty of oats to his hard-worked horses. Most shipowners undoubtedly act with justice towards their men, but those who think that a new Merchant Shipping Act is unnecessary should read some of the evidence given in the Bankruptcy Courts as to the manner in which both officers and men are occasionally treated by shipowners.

The last suggestion to which I shall call attention is that men should be entitled to two-thirds of their wages on touching at any port. I have been informed that quite recently seamen belonging to thirteen of our principal ports have petitioned the Board of Trade to the effect that one-half of their wages may be made payable monthly as contemplated by Parliament in 1880, and in Section 141 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894. I should like to see the substance of all these recommendations accepted by the Board of Trade and by Parliament as regards our own merchant shipping.

With reference to the rest of the Report, some of it concerns only Australia. It contains also several suggestions which, if acted upon, would, I think, put unnecessary burdens on shipowners and tend to throw our ships and men out of employment. But I consider that I have now said enough to show that this Report is worth obtaining and reprinting. With reference to the evidence upon which it is based, as I have not yet seen it I do not know how bulky it may be, but from the conclusions of the Commission I think it certain that some portions of it must be of interest to those concerned with the shipping of this country, and that it is desirable that some of it should be reprinted for their use and for the information of Members of both Houses. If neither the Colonial Office nor the Board of Trade are yet in possession of copies of this Report and evidence, I hope that the Government will cable for them, so that they may arrive in time to be read by Members of both Houses who take an interest in the Merchant Shipping Bill which is now being discussed in another place.

*The EARL of ELGIN: My Lords, I have received the report of the Commission appointed by the Governor-General of Australia to examine into and report upon the Navigation Bill, but I have not yet received the appendices or the evidence. I will telegraph for copies of these documents, and I propose when the Papers are completed to place a copy of them in the library of the House. I cannot say at present whether it will be necessary to reprint the whole of them as a Parliamentary Paper, but I will give consideration to that matter when the Papers reach me. With regard to the observations which the noble Lord has made I am not quite sure, as they to a large extent deal with matters that are contained in a Bill now before the other House, that they were strictly in order. But I would like to point out that in the first paragraph of the

Report it is stated that in view of the suggestion of the Imperial Government that delegates from Australia and New Zealand should attend a conference to be held in London at which the whole question of navigation as it affects the Empire might be discussed, its revision has been postponed for the present; and I am informed that in principle the Board of Trade is in substantial agreement with most of the recommendations and findings of the Commission, and that some of them merely supplement proposals for legislation now before the Imperial Parliament. Should the Australian Government agree to the conference proposed by the Imperial Government, the Board of Trade will have an opportunity of considering further what result legislation on the lines of the recommendations of the Commission would have on the shipping and commerce of this country.

ST. HELENA GARRISON.

*EARL BATHURST: My Lords, I rise to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Government are aware of the great loss that will be entailed on the islanders of St. Helena through the withdrawal of the garrison from that place, and whether they propose to pay any compensation or assist the inhabitants in any other way.

As your Lordships know, it has been decided by the Army Council that the garrison shall be withdrawn from St. Helena. Last year the infantry were recalled from the island, and we learnt from a reply to a question in the House of Commons last week that the artillery and engineers are to be withdrawn next October. I was for nearly fifteen months stationed at St. Helena with my battalion during the Boer War, and I had good opportunities of seeing the conditions under which these people live. Your Lordships know the peculiar position of St. Helena and its isolated situation. You have heard of its inhospitable rocks and bare coast, but there are fertile valleys in the island where it is possible to grow vegetables and fruit, and also stretches of rough grass land where a certain number of cattle can be reared. In the old days, when this island was in the possession of the East India Company—in the days o slavery and Chinese labour—it was very prosperous, and the Governor was in receipt of a very large sum of money. It was also an important port of call for ships on their way to India and to South Africa. A large amount of fruit and vegetables were grown there as well as coffee of rich quality.

Now, my Lords, this has all changed. The market for this produce has gone, and the troops quartered on the island constitute the only market remaining. There are practically no exports at all, and when the troops are withdrawn from the island the market will have gone and desolation will be the result. I think the state of that island may then be very well described, as another place has so aptly been, as an island where the inhabitants earn a precarious living by taking in each other's washing. In support of my remarks I should like to read a letter I received not very long ago from one of the colonists on the Island. He writes—

"What news we have is only by cable, and the whole of the inhabitants are in sad distress. The infantry were withdrawn a year ago, and that was a sad blow to the place. If the artillery are also to go it simply means ruin to the whole community. One is afraid to think what will happen. The labourers will starve, as those who employ labour now will not be in a position to do this if this scheme is carried out, as the employers will scarcely be able to exist themselves. The only island industry is raising stock and agricultural produce for the troops, the occasional vessel of war and sailing ship calling for supplies being things of the past. The town has lately been thoroughly drained by the Colonial Government, but the householders have to refund the money, the loan being spread over a number of years. Many people will consequently lose their property, this being the penalty of non-payment. If St. Helena is of value in time of war the Imperial Government should help us in time of peace in the peculiar circumstances in which we are situated."

I think this letter may well be described as a voice from St. Helena. It is the cry of people in distress, and on those grounds I have ventured to bring this question to your Lordships' notice. The debt referred to was incurred through troops and prisoners of war being quartered on the island. It was found that the drainage of the town was in such an unsatisfactory state that a large sum of money had to be spent, and I think this was done largely by the order of the Colonial Government. Churches and schools will also become vacant and useless. There is a Bishop of St. Helena and also a cathedral, besides two other churches. There is a Roman Catholic priest and a chapel. This priest is Consul for several foreign nations, as he is the only one who understands these various languages. He will have to leave the island, as there are only one or two inhabitants who are Roman Catholics. The reason for his being there was purely to meet the requirements of the Roman Catholics among the garrison.

I hope the noble Earl will be able to inform the House in what way and to what extent he is able to help this Colony. I bring this question forward rather as a request for charity from the Government, and I hope the noble Earl will be able to tell your Lordships that His Majesty's Government are prepared to render some assistance, otherwise these poor people, with ruin staring them in the face, will sink in misery and distress.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: My Lords, I confess that I have some sympathy with St. Helena. The garrison of St. Helena has an historical interest for us all, and I regret that the necessities of the British Empire have compelled its withdrawal at this moment. But, after all, the House must remember that it is only 100 men who are withdrawn, and I find it a little difficult to believe that ruin and destruction should seize upon the whole island in consequence of that withdrawal. The Government have given some practical evidence of their compassion, for if the decision of the Army Council had been rigorously carried out the garrison would have left already, but we thought that that would be dealing rather hardly with the islanders, and that they ought to have six months to make arrangements. I am afraid I cannot hold out any hope that we shall be able to find money to compensate the islanders. I am told that there is no precedent for paying compensation to individuals in a case of this kind. In regard to the island itself, of course it will be in the ordinary position of any Crown Colony. At present it has a surplus on its revenue—a sign of some prosperity, I hope—but if the revenue did not prove to be sufficient, I suppose the island would come upon the Imperial Government, like other Crown Colonies, for a grant in aid. If that happens, the British Treasury, which profits by the withdrawal of the garrison, will have to pay something by way of a grant in aid to the island. But that, of course, is a matter of public administration. So far as the inhabitants are concerned, though I am in sympathy with them, I am afraid I can hold out no hopes of compensation being found for them.

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE CONGO STATE.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, before the House adjourns, I wish to ask the noble Lord who represents the Foreign Office a Question of which I have given him private notice. It is stated in the newspapers to-day, apparently with authority, that a very important arrangement has been concluded between the Congo State and His Majesty's Government. We should be glad, I think, if the noble Lord could tell us whether that statement is correct and whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to lay any Papers on the Table with regard to it.

The UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): My Lords, it is the case that yesterday a treaty was signed on behalf of this country by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and on behalf of the Congo State by Baron van Eetvelde, who had come over here for the purpose. The statement which has appeared in regard to it is substantially correct. As, however, the matters referred to involve a great amount of complicated geographical detail, I am sure the noble Marquess will agree with me that it would not be desirable that I should attempt to make any statement with regard to the contents of the treaty at this moment. The House will all the more readily accept that from me when I announce that I shall lay Papers almost immediately—certainly not later than Monday next.

House adjourned at half-past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 10*th May*, 1906.

The House met at Quarter before Three of the Clock.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill.

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

London County Buildings Bill, Peterborough Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

STANDING ORDERS.

Standing Order 157a, relating to Private Business, was read and amended, in line 3, by inserting, after the word "Trade," the words "and His Majesty's Office of Works." And in line 6, by inserting, after the word "Trade," the words "and His Majesty's Office of Works."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7.) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Carnarvon, Sheffield, the South West Gloucestershire United Districts, and Whitby," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Mr. John Burns; read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 199.]

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bude, Camberley and District, East Barnet Valley, Exeter (Extension), Frome (Amendment), Higham Ferrers, Rushden and Wellingborough (Rural District), Mid-Durham, Wealdstone, Wisbech (Amendment), and Yardley (Amendment)," presented by Mr. Kearley; supported by Mr. Lloyd-George; read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 200.]

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

Ascot District Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill; Brixham Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Sheffield Assay Office Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. Bill to be read the third time.

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [Lords]; Holyhead Water Bill [Lords]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Middlesex County Council (Tramways) Bill. Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bristol Corporation Bill; Metropolitan District Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 5).

Mr. ASHTON reported from the Committee on Group 5 of Railway Bills that the parties promoting the Cork Link Railways Bill had stated that the evidence of Timothy J. O'Mahony was essential to their case; and it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Timothy J. O'Mahony do attend the said Committee upon Monday, May 14th, at Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That Timothy J. O'Mahony do attend the Committee on Group 5 of Railway Bills upon Monday next, at Eleven of the clock.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make provision for dealing with the arrears of dividend on the preference and Second Preference Shares of the Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways, Company, Limited, and the accumulated balance to the debit of its revenue account; and for the increase and re-arrangement of its capital; and for other purposes." [Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [Lords.]

Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [Lords]; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

BUILDING LANDS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Forfar, against; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Alvecote; Amington; Ansley Hall; Arley; Attleborough; Baddesley; Barnacle; Bedworth; Bell Green; Birch Coppice; Bulkington; Chilvers Coton; Coalville; Collycroft; Dudley; Duffryn; Exhall (two); Glascote; Hawkesbury; Highley; Kinlet; Longford; Nuneaton; Oakengates; Pensnett; Pooley Hall; Rates Hill; Ringsbury; Sowe Waste; Stockingford (three); Tunnel Pit; Tyrergyd; Whiteley; Wilnecote; and, Wyken Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Clapham, against, to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Acton Beauchamp; Aikton (three); Alburgh; Alcester; Alveston; Amblecote; Ansley; Ansty; Aston Cantlow; Barlaston (two); Barmington; Bedworth; Blackburn; Bowness on Solway and Aikton; Bramham; Brinklow; Bursledon (two); Catton with Stamford Bridge; Carlisle; Cathedine (two); Chilvers Coton; Chorley (two); Clifton on Dunsmore; Colne (two); Combroke; Coventry (two); Cubbington; Cuckfield; Eastern Green (two); Elton; Ettington; Foleshill; Forton; Freshford; Gaydon; Glastonbury (two); Grandborough; Halford; Hanging Heaton (two); Harbury; Hartshill; Haselor; Houghton in the Dale; Hulme Walfield; Hunningham; Hurdsfield; Idlicote; Kenilworth (two); Keresley; Kilmersdon; Leamington; Lillington; Little Walsingham (two); Loxley; Lydd; Macclesfield (four); Manchester; Monks Kirby; Moreton Morrell; Newbold Pacey; North Stoneham; Nottingham; Oldberrow cum Morton Bagot and Spernall; Old Milverton; Oxwich (two); Preston Bagot; Priors Hardwick; Priors Marston; Ratley; Ringwould (two); Snitterfield; Soothill Upper (two); Stockton; Sutton with Macclesfield (two); Swanington; Twickenham (East); Tysoe; Wappenbury; Warwick (three); Wasperton; Wellow (two); West Dean with Binderton (two); Westgate on Sea; Weston (Warwick); Whichford; Wolford; Wolvey; and, Worsthorne with Hurstwood; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions for alteration; From Dorset; Sandwich; and, Trowbridge; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Portsmouth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Forfar, against; to lie upon the Table.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (No. 2) BILL.

Petition of the Incorporated Society of Law Agents in Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES TAXATION &c. (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Forfar, against; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES TAXATION &c. (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from the Royal Burghs of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Forfar, against; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Forfar, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

SMALL TENANTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Forfar, against; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Forfar, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (ESTIMATE).

Copy presented, of Estimate of Revenue and Expenditure of the Government of India for 1905–6, compared with the results of 1904–5 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 164.]

EAST INDIA (FINANCE AND REVENUE ACCOUNTS).

Copy presented, of Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India for 1904–5 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (HOME ACCOUNTS).

Copy presented, of Home Accounts of the Government of India [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 165.]

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of the number of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended March 31st, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Rule amending the Time Table of Examinations for 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3582 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NORTH SEA FISHERY INVESTIGATIONS.

Copy presented, of Reports of the British Delegates attending the Meetings of the International Council for the Exploration of the sea in 1903, 1904, and 1905, and Reports and Correspondence relating thereto [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Fixing of Irish Rents.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether the assessor who attends the head Land Commission on the 12th June next at Ennis, in the County of Clare, will fix rents on the assumption that Canadian cattle will be admitted in the near future.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that the appeal court referred to will fix rents after hearing the parties, and having regard to the interest of the landlord and tenant respectively, and having considered all the circumstances of the case, holding, and district. The assessor must hear the evidence, and on the application of either of the parties inspect the holding and report thereon to the Judicial Commissioners in the prescribed manner.

MR. HALPIN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state who is the assessor appointed to attend with the head Land Commission announced to be held at Ennis, county Clare, on the 12th June next; what are his qualifications and experiences as a land valuer; is he to value holdings according to their appearance without regard to the quality of the soil and subsoil; will he, when valuing lands, allow for the top dressing put on this spring; and whether he will give instructions to the sub and Chief Commissioners to do justice to the tenants in view of their buying their holdings?

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that it would be irregular and undesirable that they should state for the purposes of a reply in Parliament the names and qualifications of the assessors who are to sit with the Judicial Commissioners in cases which have yet to be heard. The discussion in Parliament of such pending cases, and the subjecting of the assessors to criticism in advance of the hearing would, in the opinion of the Land Commissioners lead to serious embarrassment, and render it increasingly difficult to carry on the business of the Land Commission. Upon the hearing of appeals the assessors sit in open court, and all persons concerned then become aware of the composition of the tribunal by which their cases are to be decided. The existing assessors were appointed in 1903 as being persons of skill and experience in agriculture, in accordance with the 89th Section of the Act. The qualifications of these gentlemen have already been stated in Parliamentary Papers.

Improvements of Irish Lands.

MR. MEAGHER (Kilkenny, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether in view of the fact that the Land Commissioners have power, under Section 12, Sub-section 1, of the Irish Land Act, 1903, to improve lands purchased by them, will he state how much land has been improved, drained, or reclaimed, and to what extent they have otherwise exercised the powers conferred on them by Section 12, Sub-section 2, of the Act of 1903, or have the Land Commissioners issued any Return showing the amount of small or congested holdings which have been enlarged or exchanged by them?

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that it would not be possible to furnish a statement of the exact area of land improved, drained, or reclaimed. They have, however, furnished me with the following summary, which indicates the matters on which sums have been expended by them for the benefit or improvement of estates or untenanted land under the section referred to. The figures given indicate the amounts sanctioned up to 31st March last for expenditure on the different matters enumerated, portion of the sums being still in course of expenditure, and the sums expended being drawn from the Reserve Fund pursuant to Section 43 (1) of the Act.

	£
Buildings and repair of houses .	17,465
Drainage, fencing, and amalgamation of holdings	2,508
Improvement works generally .	4,495
Advances and grants for stock .	5,420
Special purposes	594
Total expenditure sanctioned to date	£30,482

Up to the present the Commissioners have not exercised the compulsory powers given them by Section 12, Sub-section (2), which have reference only to a congested estate. As appears by the Commissioners' Annual Report to 31st March, 1905, eighty-eight holdings had up to that date been enlarged by the addition of parcels, and from that date to 31st March, 1906, 170 additional holdings had been similarly enlarged, making a total of 258 holdings enlarged.

Temporary Assistant Land Commissioners.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what are the names of all persons who have been appointed for the first time to the office of Temporary Assistant Commissioner (non-legal) in the Irish Land Commission under the Rules of 13th March, 1899; the date on which each of them was appointed; whether he did or did not pass the examination for such appointments which was prescribed by the Civil Service Commissioners; and if he did not pass it, by whom was he examined with the view of ascertaining that he possessed the qualifications required by the said Rules.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The following is a list of all persons who have been appointed for the first time to the office of Temporary Assistant Commissioner (non-legal) under the rules made by the Irish Land Commissioners, on the 13th March, 1899:—

Name.	Date of first appointment.
Bomford, G.L.	3rd June 1899.
Cochrane, G.A.	"
(a) Croasdaile, L.	"
(a) Esmonde, T.L.	"
Greene, R.W.	"
Humphreys, W.D.	"
(b) Macoun, J.	"
Owen, R.H.	"
(b) Pinkerton, R.D.	"
Smith, S.E.	"
(c) West, A.W.	"
(b) Dobbs, A.C.	26th August 1899.
(c) Green, T.S.	"
Harvey, R.	"
Marsh, R.M.	"
Smyth, P.R.	"
(d) Strain, D.	"
(d) Wark, J.A.	"
Bagot, J.C.	4th September 1889.
(d) Stuart, W.H.	16th May 1900.
(c) Kyle, W.H.	8th May 1901.
Flanagan, M.	2nd April 1906.
Gill, J.	"
Howard, J.J.	"
Lafferty, P.	"
Linehan, T.	"

The statutory rules of March 13th, 1899, which state the qualifications necessary for Assistant Commissioners, do not prescribe examination. The late Government, however, thought that an examination would be useful in enabling them to select gentlemen out of a nominated list, and the first twenty-one gentlemen named in the above statement were examined accordingly. The present Government considered that examination was not necessarily a suitable mode of selection for men whose wide practical experience was fully established by sufficient evidence, and the last five on the list were accordingly appointed by the Government who were satisfied, after they had all been seen and questioned, that they possessed the statutory qualifications in an eminent degree.

(a) Not re-appointed 1st April 1906. But is employed for a few weeks to complete unfinished work.

(b) Not re-appointed 1st October 1903. Staff then reduced. Has, however, within the past few days been appointed for temporary duty under Estates Commissioners.

(c) Not re-appointed 1st October 1903. Staff then reduced. But subsequently re appointed to a vacancy by the late Government.

(d) Not re-appointed 1st October 1903. Staff then reduced.

The New Forest as a Military Training Ground.

Mr. FIENNES (Oxfordshire, Banbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that large tracts of land in the New Forest belonging to the Crown are valuable for the camping and training of soldiers of all branches of the service, owing to the practical and natural facilities they afford, he will consider the advisability of taking steps to make use of this land on a large scale for military purposes.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am glad that my hon. friend has given me the opportunity of pointing out how much the War Department is indebted to the Office of Woods and Forests for the facilities which they have granted every year for training in the New Forest. At the same time I am glad to draw attention to the great assistance given to us by the verderers. I can assure my hon. friend that, in view of the constant help given to the troops by both the Office of Woods and Forests and the verderers, there is no necessity to take any steps of the nature suggested in the Question.

Accommodation at Fort George.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that the casemates at Fort George Barracks were built in 1745, and that casemates have been condemned for many years by every officer quartered in these barracks, will arrangements be made for the erection of new barracks or suitable sleeping accommodation for regiments quartered at Fort George.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) My hon. friend is mistaken in supposing that officers quartered in barracks have the power to condemn any portion of them. There is no present intention of providing new accommodation.

Exhibition of the New Short Rifle.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the cause of the delay in placing the new short rifle in the Tea Room.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The rifle was handed in to the office of the Sergeant at Arms on May 3rd, and is, I believe, on view in the Cloak Room. The Tea Room was found to afford no convenient facilities for an exhibition of the qualities of this weapon.

Disturbances at Brunei.

Sir EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he has now any information from the Resident thowing light upon the unrest and disturbances in the Sultanate of Brunei.

(*Answerered by Mr. Churchill.*) The information is being asked for by despatch, and cannot be received for some time to come.

Examination for Veterinary Inspectors of the Board of Agriculture.

Mr. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the examination of veterinary inspectors of the Animals Division of the Board of Agriculture for promotion to the permanent staff is the same as the examination for fellowship of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons; if so, whether those inspectors now holding the fellowship degree of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons can be exempted from the veterinary portion of that examination; and whether he is aware that in the Army veterinary service it is the practice to exempt fellows of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons from undergoing the examination on promotion from captains to majors

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The scheme of examination for our veterinary inspectors has not yet been finally settled, but it is probable that it will differ materially from that for the Fellowship of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. This being the case, and in view of the special character of the work of our veterinary inspectors, it is doubtful whether the suggestion made by my hon. friend is one which could with advantage be adopted, but the matter is one for determination by the Civil Service Commissioners and not by the Board themselves. The reply to the concluding inquiry of my hon. friend is in the affirmative.

Erection of New Elementary Schools at Trelogan and Gwespyr.

Sir. THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he will take steps to send down an official to ascertain on the spot the local circumstances before sanctioning the erection of new public elementary schools at Trelogan and Gwespyr (Flint).

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) In both of the cases named the question of the provision of a council school by the local authority has already been definitely decided by the Board in the affirmative. In the first-named case, however, there is an outstanding point as to the size of the school, and on this I shall be happy to send an official to the locality, as requested, to ascertain the circumstances with precision for the information of the Board.

Pay of Peterhead Prison Guard.

MR. JAMES MURRAY (Aberdeenshire, E.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the sergeant, corporal, and privates of the prison guard in Peterhead Convict Prison, while performing similar duties to the guard of convict prisons in England, receive a lower scale of pay and of pension; and whether he will put them on the same footing as similar offices in England.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) My attention has not before been directed to the matter referred to by the hon. Member, but it was inquired into in 1903 and it was then resolved to make no increase in the scale of pay. I may add that owing to differences of classification no very direct comparison can be drawn between the prison staffs of Scotland and England.

Passive Resisters in Prison.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state whether the Return issued on the 26th April, showing the number of prisoners on the 26th day of March, 1906, includes passive resisters; and, if so, how many of such prisoners are so included.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The Return includes all persons imprisoned for non-payment of rates. The number of passive resisters in prison could not be stated separately. As I said in reply to a Question in this House last Tuesday there is no legal distinction between a "passive resister" and an ordinary "rate defaulter."

Promotion of Post Office Second Division Clerks.

MR. MICKLEM (Hertfordshire, Watford): To ask the Postmaster-General whether Second Division clerks permanently in the employ of the Post Office, such as those in the Accountant-General's Department and in the Savings Banks Department, are debarred either by reason of their Second Division certificate, or in practice, from appointment to higher posts such as assistant surveyorships and postmasterships which are open to sorting clerks and telegraphists; and, if so, whether he will take steps to have the restriction removed; and, if not, whether he will have the fact brought to the notice of the heads of Departments, as misapprehension exists on the subject; and whether he will state the number of Second Division clerks so appointed during the last six years.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Second Division clerks are not debarred from appointments to the higher posts referred to. During the last six years seven Second Division clerks have been appointed second class assistant surveyors, but none have obtained postmasterships.

Alleged Drunkenness of Postman on Duty at Portadown.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received a report that on the night of Saturday, the 17th February last, a postman attached to the office in Portadown arrived at the Great Northern railway station, with the mail bag in his possession in a state of intoxication; that, instead of delivering the bag at the post office, he went into the third class waiting room and threw himself on the floor, in which position he remained till 2 a.m.; and whether any notice has been taken by the authorities of this neglect of duty.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will make inquiry, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Professor of Sanskrit in the Presidency College of Calcutta.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the proposal to appoint a European officer to be professor of Sanskrit in the Presidency College o

Calcutta has given rise to unfavourable comment in India; and, seeing that the general feeling in that country is in favour of adhering to the practice of employing properly qualified Indians to be teachers of Sanskrit in the Government colleges, will he state what action he proposes to take.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) No proposal as to the professorship of Sanskrit in the Presidency College, Calcutta, has reached me. I do not propose, therefore, to take any action in the matter.

Processions in India.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India in view of the fact that Mr. Pugh, the late Advocate-General of Bengal, has given it as his opinion that the executive order of the Government of Eastern Bengal, prohibiting processions and the singing in public of the national hymn Bande Mataram, or Hail Motherland, to be illegal, will he state why this opinion has been ignored by the Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The matter is entirely one for the Courts to decide; and I understand that a case is now pending that raises this point.

State Aid to the Blind.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government will consider the advisability of granting State-aid to the blind; whether he is aware that the International Conference held at Edinburgh last year reported that the present voluntary system is totally inadequate, and that Continental countries have a systematized method of dealing with this afflicted class.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer to my reply to a Question put by the hon. Member for South Belfast on 27th March,† when I stated that the question of reintroducing the Irish Education (Afflicted Children) Bill of last session was under consideration. I hope it may be possible to introduce that Bill this session.

The Woodrooffe Estate, County Waterford.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners are in negotiation with the owners of the Woodrooffe Estate, county Waterford, which comprises about 800 acres of untenanted land; and whether they have yet made an offer for this portion of the estate.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have not been able to trace the owner of the estate referred to; but if the hon. Member will furnish them with the name and address of any person who can give information, they will make inquiries.

Irish Poor Law Medicine Contracts.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland for what reason the Local Government Board of Ireland refused to sanction the action of the Kilmacthomas Board of Guardians in giving the contract for the supply of medicine to the union to Messrs Boileau and Boyd, of Dublin, a well-known firm; is he aware that Messrs. Boileau and Boyd's tender was only one and a quarter per cent. higher than the tender of Messrs. Sumner, of Liverpool; and that the Local Government Board sanctioned the action of the Dungarvan Board of Guardians, who gave the contract for the supply of medicines to Messrs. Boileau and Boyd, though in the case of Dungarvan the tender of Messrs. Boileau and Boyd was one and a quarter per cent. higher than the tender of Messrs. Sumner.

(*Answerer by Mr. Bryce.*) The Board of Guardians of Kilmacthomas Union advanced no reason for their proposal to accept the higher tender, and upon their attention being called by the Local Government Board to their regulation on the subject the guardians decided to accept the lower tender. The Dungarvan Board of Guardians advanced good reasons for not accepting the lower tender, and the Local Government Board accordingly assented to their application that they might accept the higher tender.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1077.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Dockyard Workmen.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the adjustment of the workmen's service in His Majesty's dockyards has now been completed; if not, when it will be completed, and whether such adjustment will necessitate a decreased number of men being employed.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): It cannot be stated at present when the adjustments will be completed, as the details are still under careful consideration.

Boer Ex-Civil Servants.

EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a speech delivered by General Smuts to Het Volk on March 23rd, and containing the statement that it would be the work of Het Volk to try its utmost for the Boer ex-civil servants now out of billets, and that men who had sacrificed everything for their country and who to-day had nothing for their sacrifices must be put back in their old positions; and, whether His Majesty's Government intend that the grant of representative government to the Transvaal shall be accompanied by guarantees for the rights and interests of the British civil servants employed under the existing administration.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I have read the speech of March 23rd referred to. I cannot add anything at present to my reply of May 7th to a similar Question.† For his convenience I shall be glad to send my noble friend a copy of the Answer to which I have referred.

St. Helena.

*MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the economic loss that will accrue to the inhabitants of St. Helena as the result of the withdrawal of the garrison from the island, His Majesty's Government propose to devote any sum of money to their relief in the form of a grant-in-aid.

MR. CHURCHILL: It would be premature to determine the question of a grant-in-aid from St. Helena until it is seen what effect the withdrawal of the garrison actually has upon the finances of the island. But my hon. friend may rest assured that the interests of this small colony which has so long been used for Imperial purposes, sometimes of capital importance, will not be a matter of indifference to the Secretary of State or to His Majesty's Government.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): Will consideration be given at the same time to similar placed Colonies such as Barbadoes?

MR. CHURCHILL: I should like to have notice of that Question.

Johannesburg Labour Day Demonstration against Indentured Labour.

MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that at Johannesburg on Labour Day, April 13th, a demonstration of labour societies was held in the market place, consisting of several thousand persons, at which a resolution was carried that the mass meeting reaffirms its unaltered opposition to the importation of indentured labour, and urged the Home Government to take seriously into consideration the threat of some mine owners to close down the mines and throw over all construction work, thereby accentuating the present distress which existed long before the advent of the present Government; and whether the Government is aware that this labour demonstration against Chinese labour was preceded by a similar one in December, and another in October last; and whether these expressions of opinion by miners have been brought before the Secretary of State; and, if so, what action he proposes to take.

I beg further to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a letter addressed by the General Secretary of the Transvaal Miners' Association to the Secretary of the Cape District Trades and Labour Council, in which the Transvaal miners allege that until the importation of Chinese coolies the British miners on the Rand received 25s. a day, but that at the Comet Mine, the first mine where the skilled miners had to work with Chinese in hand drilling, the wages were reduced from 25s. to 16s. 8d. a day; that the alleged increase of 5,000 white miners employed is due to white men being employed at 5s. a day; that whereas before the war there were 13,000 skilled men employed with 109,000 Kaffirs, to-day, there are not 13,000 skilled men employed with 147,000 unskilled labourers; and that the more Chinamen come the more skilled workmen will be out of employment; and whether the Government have received any of these statements.

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† See Col. 962.

MR. CHURCHILL: With my hon. friend's permission I will give an answer which embraces both his Questions. The Secretary of State has seen the account of the demonstration on April 13th, the resolution then passed, and the other expressions of opinion by the miners which are referred to. He has not seen the letter addressed by the General Secretary of the Transvaal Miners' Association to the Secretary of the Cape District Trades and Labour Council, but he is, of course, well acquainted with the issues which it raises. There seems good reason for believing that the general trend of opinion among a considerable section of the British mining population in Johannesburg has, during the last year, become increasingly adverse to the continuance or extension of the system of Chinese indentured labour; and the growth of such local opposition must, I think, be regarded as of good augury by those who support the policy of His Majesty's Government.

Indian Viceregal Council Budget Debates.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the protests made in India against the narrow limitation of the time now assigned to the Budget debate in the Viceregal Council; and whether he will consult with the Government of India as to the desirability of such an extension of the time as would enable a reasonable review to be made of the wide field of subjects covered by the Budget.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): I am aware, and I am not surprised, that it has been suggested that the debate should extend over three days instead of one; but my attention has not been called to any protests on the subject. I will bring the hon. Member's Question before the notice of the Government of India.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.) asked whether the Indian people had any voice in the control of the finance of their country?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I think the hon. Member is well enough aware of the constitution of the Government of India to know that I cannot give him any answer which is satisfactory to him.

MR. O'GRADY: But have they?

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Was that a proper answer to give, Mr. Speaker? The Question was perfectly civil, and surely the hon. Member was entitled to a civil reply.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I think my answer was quite civil, and not discourteous.

Shooting by Soldiers near Village Sites in India.

*SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to what is known as the Dadri case in the Bulandshahr district of the United Provinces in India, in which some soldiers, who are understood to have been disobeying departmental orders by shooting near a village site, were molested by the villagers, with the result that one of the villagers was shot dead and five others have been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment for rioting; and whether, looking to the character of these cases, which are not uncommon in India, he will issue peremptory instructions which shall effectually prevent the practice of shooting by soldiers near village sites.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I have at present no knowledge of the case referred to, but I will make inquiry.

Indian Judges and Executive Offices.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that two civilian chief judges of the Lower Burma chief court have, in succession, been recently promoted to executive appointments, one to the lieutenant-governorship of Burma, the other to the Viceregal Council, with the probable reversion of the lieutenant-governorship; whether, with the view of restoring public confidence in the independence of judges, he will consider the advisability of discontinuing the practice of promoting judges to executive offices; and whether, seeing that a qualified non-civilian barrister, who has no claim to executive office, is now officiating as chief judge in Lower Burma, he will consider the advisability of confirming him in the appointment.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I am aware of the facts stated in the first paragraph of the Question. I have no reason to suppose that these appointments tend to impair public confidence in the independence of the judges. The appointment of judges in the chief court of Lower Burma rests by law with the Governor-General in Council, who will no doubt consider the matter referred to in the last paragraph of the Question.

Tabah.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he has any official information showing that the Turkish troops had been at Tabah for two months before the advancing Egyptian troops discovered them, and that Tabah, which is a brackish well in a desert, was previous to that time in the effective occupation of the Egyptian Government; will he state the distance of Tabah from the line which the Egyptian Government now claims to be the boundary, and from the Suez Canal; whether the Egyptian troops are now in occupation of the island of Geziret-el-Faraoun; and whether the Turkish Government claims this island as its own territory; will he also say whether each of the contending parties is now occupying territory claimed by the other, and near to an ill-defined border line; and whether he will consider the advisability of submitting the matter in dispute to international arbitration.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The claims put forward by Turkey in the course of the negotiations have raised issues going far beyond Tabah and other points referred to in the Question. We cannot refer the safety of the Canal and of Egypt to arbitration, and the best method of defining the frontier is by a Joint Commission, which is what we have proposed.

MR. LUPTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly answer my Question?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have answered it.

MR. LUPTON: How many miles is it from Suez to Tabah?

SIR EDWARD GREY: It is a good many miles from Suez to Tabah. I understood the point of the hon. Gentleman's Question to be whether we would not refer the question as to Tabah to arbitration. I would point out that, while it is a good many miles from Tabah to Suez, the claims put forward by Turkey during the course of these negotiations have raised issues that go far beyond Tabah and the other places referred to in the hon. Gentleman's Question.

MR. LUPTON: Will the right hon. Baronet kindly say whether it is 130 miles from Tabah to Suez?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I do not say that it is not 130 miles; but in view of the much larger claims put forward by Turkey in the course of the negotiations, it is a matter of considerable indifference what the exact number of miles is.

MR. LUPTON: Will the right hon. Baronet kindly say how many miles from the Egyptain boundary line Tabah is? Is it more than two?

SIR EDWARD GREY: If the hon. Member will give me notice of the Question I will reply.

MR. LUPTON: It is part of the Question.

The Congo Agreement.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Can the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs say if any settlement has been come to with the Government of the Congo Free State as to the Bahr-el-Ghazal, and if so, what are the terms?

SIR EDWARD GREY: An agreement between His Majesty's Government and the Congo State was signed yesterday. The best way to make known the terms of the Agreement will be to lay the whole Agreement on the Table, and that will be done on Monday at the latest.

Police Inspector and Testimonials.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state how many police inspectors have left the force during the past year; and in how many of these cases have inspectors on leaving gone round and solicited the publicans in the district to subscribe to a testimonial for them.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): Forty-two Metropolitan Police Inspectors left the force during the year ended 31st March, 1906. Several of these Inspectors received testimonials to which no publicans are believed to have subscribed, but only in one instance is there reason to suspect that the Inspector may have solicited publicans to subscribe.

Prison Warders' Grievances.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will now state what steps he proposes to take in regard to the alleged grievances of warders of local prisons.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: I fear I can only refer the hon. Member to the Answer † which I gave on Monday to the hon. Member for Sunderland, in which I stated that this matter would receive my most careful consideration.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Has the right hon. Gentleman any idea when an Answer will be given?

*MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid I cannot say at present.

Gravesend Port Sanitary Hospital.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state how many aliens suffering from infectious disease were last year treated at the port sanitary hospital at Denton, Gravesend; and what expenditure was incurred in their treatment.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether aliens who have been treated for infectious disease at the Port Sanitary Hospital at Denton, Gravesend, are, when discharged or convalescent, examined by an immigration officer as alien steerage passengers coming within the scope of the Aliens Act, or are discharged from the hospital without such examination.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I am informed by the town clerk of the City that the number of aliens suffering from infectious diseases who were treated at the Port Sanitary Hospital at Denton, near Gravesend, dnring the year 1905 was thirty six, and the proportion of expenditure incurred in the treatment and maintenance of such aliens was £485. This expenditure is borne entirely by the Corporation of London out of its corporate funds and not by the rates. No charge is made either to shipowners or patients. Any such alien who was liable on his arrival in this country to inspection under the Aliens Act has, by virtue of Rule 9 made thereunder, to be inspected before release from hospital.

Alien Paupers—Case of Annie Vischner.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he proposes to take to prevent the ratepayers of this country being continually burthened by the alien girl, who has not long been in this country, who is twelve years of age semi-blind, and of stunted growth, who has refused to remain with her aunt owing to ill-treatment by her aunt, and who, in accordance with a letter from the Local Government Board, is to be removed from the school to which she had been sent by the Bethnal Green Board of Guardians to another school, though the Bethnal Green Board of Guardians is, nevertheless, to continue to bear the cost.

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† See Col. 979.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Assuming that the Question relates to the case of a girl called Annie Vischner, who arrived in this country in March 1904, I have made inquiries but I have no powers to take any steps in the direction indicated. I may, however, say that the case has been under the consideration of the Jewish Association for the protection of girls and women, and it is at their instance that the removal of the girl from the workhouse schools is proposed. It is intended to send her to an industrial school for Jewish girls, the final arrangements for which, including the question of maintenance, have not yet been made.

Prison Reports.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Report on Prisons (England and Wales) for the year ending March 31st, 1905, was circulated on October 20th, 1905; and whether he will take steps to ensure that in future the Report on Prisons (England and Wales) shall be circulated sooner than seven months after the period with which it deals.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Having regard to the great number of returns included in the Report, which cannot be made up till the conclusion of the year under report, and to the necessity for careful check and tabulation after receipt, and to subsequent delays which are incidental to the printing and reviewing, I am not able to give any pledge that presentation can take place at an earlier period, though every effort will be made by those concerned te expedite the publication.

District Railway Company.

MR. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can put a stop to the District Railway Company continually obtaining money by issuing tickets to the public when certain trains are not running, as it would appear that the company instructs the ticket office to go on issuing tickets until they are officially stopped, although they know certain trains are not running.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): If my hon. friend will furnish particulars of the practice of which he complains, I will consider whether the Board of Trade can usefully communicate with the railway company thereon. I may say, however, that as I am informed by the railway company, a passenger who purchases a ticket can always get his money back if there is no train to take him to his destination.

Light Dues.

MR. W. R. REA (Scarborough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is now able to say whether a Royal Commission will be appointed to inquire into the incidence and administration of the light dues.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I did not gather from the tenor of the debate on Friday that there was any readiness on the part of the shipping community to accept the suggestion thrown out for an inquiry into the administration of the light dues. The Government never contemplated that any such inquiry should extend to the question of the incidence of the dues.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a number of Members voted against the Light Dues Bill the other day because they understood a Commission was to be appointed?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: And the Government are perfectly willing to have an inquiry into the administration if it is desired by the shipowners.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): Other people besides shipowners are interested.

MR. W. R. REA: May the House take it that the right hon. Gentleman will grant an inquiry?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Certainly, if it is desired.

Wireless Telegraphy.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General when the promised Return dealing with the working of the Wireless Telegraphy Act will be printed and available for the use of Members of this House.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I hope to present the Return shortly.

Postal Servants' Grievances.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will move for a Select Committee to inquire into the conditions under which the thousands of persons, excluded from the purview of the Select Committee on Post Office Servants now sitting, and employed either directly or under contracts issued by the Department for which he is responsible, or otherwise employed in connection with the postal and telegraph services, carry out their duties, so that the grievances advanced by these wage earners may be considered by an independent body in the same manner as the alleged grievances of the principal classes of the postal service are now being examined, at his instance, by a Select Committee of this House.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I do not propose to act on the suggestion of the hon. Member. When the Committee on Postal Servants has reported, and a conclusion has been come to in reference to their recommendations, I shall be prepared to consider and deal with the claims of any of those classes of postal servants who may have been omitted from the inquiry. As regards those employed by contractors, I am glad to say that I have recently obtained the assent of the Treasury to the appointment of an additional deputy staff officer in the Stores Department, who will act as Inspector of Contracts. Thus, the Postmaster-General will in the future be able to exercise supervision over the conditions of employment prevailing under Post Office contracts.

Roman Catholic Disabilities.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the provisions of the Catholic Emancipation Act (10 Geo. IV., c. 7., s. 16) which prohibit Catholics from holding any office or place whatever, by whatever name the same may be called in the universities or colleges of Eton, Westminster, or Winchester, or any college or school within this realm, are still in force: if not, why are these provisions printed as unrepealed in the last edition of the revised statutes; and if they have not been abrogated, will he take advantage of the present Education Bill to repeal same.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): As regards England and Wales, with which alone the Board of Education are concerned, I am not aware of any general repeal of the disability referred to. A foot-note to "the statutes revised" (to which the hon. Member refers) states (volume 4, page 879), "so much of the Act as relates to any of the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham, or any college therein, is repealed." (34 and 35 Vic., cap. 26, sec. 8.) As regards "any college or school within this realm," the Answer raises very difficult legal questions, on which I have no authority to offer an opinion. I may add that an analogous disability as regards obtaining or holding the mastership of similar colleges and schools by Protestant Dissenters is to be found in the Nonconformist Relief Act, 1779, Section 3. As regards the second paragraph, I am not responsible for the issue of the statutes revised. As regards the concluding paragraph, I may say that my attention has only now been drawn to the point, if it be one, in regard to these disabilities, and it shall have my careful consideration.

Teachers' Compensation.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education how many cases of compensation to teachers have been dealt with under Schedule 2 of the Education Act of 1902; and why no similar provision for compensation on loss of office is made or continued in Clause 7 of the Bill before the House.

MR. BIRRELL: I have no information as to the number of claims by teachers for compensation that have been dealt with under the schedule in question. Such cases do not come before the Board of Education, but would be dealt with by local authorities under Section 120, Subsection (3), of the Local Government Act, 1888, subject to an appeal to the Treasury in cases of dispute. These latter have been very few, I believe about six. In regard to the second paragraph I may say that I am not aware that the new Bill can bring about any conditions of the same nature as those for which compensation was provided in the schedule referred to. But the mater shall have my careful consideration.

Education Bill—Financial Provisions.

LORD ROBERT CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the £1,000,000 per annum to be granted for the purposes of the Education Bill is to be allocated solely to the arrangements under Clause 2 and the schemes under Clause 8; and, if not, to what other purposes it will be applicable.

MR. BIRRELL: As I stated in Answer to a Question on April 26 † from the hon. Member for Blackpool, the new grant will be distributed to local authorities in aid of the local education rate in accordance with regulations which, I hope, will now be issued very shortly. The grant will thus go to reduce the charges in respect of any of their elementary education work which the local authority has to bear, and is not allocated to the points named in the Question nor to any others.

Distress Committees in Scotland.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state at what towns in Scotland Distress Committees have been established under the Unemployed Workmen's Act of 1905, and what sums have been expended by such Committees for the purposes prescribed under Section 1, sub-Section (5) of the Act.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): Distress Committees have been established in fourteen burghs, viz.:—Aberdeen, Dumfries, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Govan, Inverness, Kilmarnock, Leith, Paisley, Partick, Dalbeattie. The information asked for in the second part of the Question will be shown in the accounts for the financial year closing on May 15th.

Sanitary Condition of the Lews.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, in their Minute of March 19th last, propose to provide industrial training for boys and girls resident in the island of Lewis, as recommended in the Report presented to the Secretary for Scotland from the island of Lewis in 1903, will he state whether it is proposed to adopt the recommendations contained in that Report in regard to sites for new dwellings in the townships in the island, especially having regard to the opinion expressed by Dr. Dittmar in his Report on the sanitary condition of the Lews.

MR. SINCLAIR: As the hon. Member is aware the difficulty is that there are no funds available at present for the improvement of the sanitary condition of the island; the Government is considering the matter; but I am not able now to make any statement in regard to it.

Garrabost Crofters.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that the crofters of Garrabost, Island of Lewis, to whom skinned lands, that is land from which the peats have been removed, were recently offered for the enlargement of the agricultural land of their crofts, are mainly widows and old men unable to undertake the arduous work of bringing the land into cultivation, will the land be offered to the cottars in the district who are chiefly young men well able and willing to cope with the labour involved.

MR. SINCLAIR: It is not intended to offer the land in question to cottars seeing that it is already in the occupation of crofters for grazing purposes and therefore not at the disposal of the landlord.

Portmahomack Salmon Fisheries.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that, although in the case of Middleton *v.* Patterson the High Court of Justiciary decided, in January, 1904, that fishing tenants on the sea coast cannot compel their men to slap the nets on Sunday, the Conon Fishery Board, Ross-shire, have intimated to the Portmahomack salmon fishers that, notwithstanding the foregoing decision, the Board requires the nets to be slapped on Sunday, when through stress of weather this cannot be done on Saturday, and, seeing that the fishermen of Hilton and Balintore, who are employed by the salmon fishers, absolutely decline to give any form of Sunday labour, he will consider the expediency of communicating with the Conon Fishery Board on the subject, especially having regard to the fact that the fishermen in these villages are exposed to the risk of loss of their employment.

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† See Col. 23.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware of the case referred to by the hon. Member and my attention has also been drawn to the later case of Macrorie *v.* Forman. The matter is, however, one for legal interpretation and action, and the Secretary for Scotland has no powers which enable him to open communication with Conon Fishery Board with the purpose of controlling their action.

House Titles in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that some of the landless cottars in the Island of Lewis who are living in insanitary and otherwise uninhabitable houses in some of the townships have recently built substantial stone houses at their own expense on the waste lands of the crofters' common grazing whereby the congestion of such insanitary townships is relieved, will he consider the expediency of urging the proprietor to grant titles at fair rents to such cottars, especially having regard to the fact that the construction of white stone houses materially relieves the local authorities of their duties in regard to the administration of the Public Health (Scotland) Acts, the provisions of which are at present ignored in every one of the townships in the island.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am not prepared at present to adopt the course suggested by the hon. Member.

Stirlingshire Roads.

MR. SMEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that considerable inconvenience and discomfort have been caused in certain parts of Stirlingshire, notably in and around Kippen, by the prolonged delay in confirming the orders of the county council closing some of the more dangerous roads to motor traffic and if he will now expedite confirmation of these orders.

MR. SINCLAIR: The county council have no power to make orders in the matter. Their application requesting me to make special regulations closing numerous roads to motor car traffic and imposing a ten-mile limit in many others is under consideration. Objections have been received, and steps are being taken to expedite examination of the roads, with a view to an early decision.

Continental Gipsies in Scotland.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that a party of continental gipsies, numbering twelve, landed at Leith on Saturday from the ss. "Cumberland," and another of fourteen on Sunday from the ss. "Weimar"; that these twenty-six aliens had previously been refused admission at Hartlepool; that on arrival they at once joined another band, numbering twenty-two, and are proceeding through the country with them; and whether His Majesty's Government are yet prepared to announce what steps they intend to take to abate this nuisance.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; I am aware of the further arrivals of foreign gipsies stated in the Question; and I think there is little doubt that they are the persons who, in a party of twenty-six, were recently prevented from landing at the non-immigration port of West Hartlepool. In view of the considerable number of these persons, *prima facie* undesirable, who have been brought by the ships belonging to James Currie & Co. of Leith, and in view of the fact that the traffic has been obviously organised so as to escape inspection, I have decided to provide for the inspection of alien passengers on board Messrs. Currie's ships. For this purpose, I am making an order under Section 8 (2) of the Act, fixing the number 2 as that which will constitute those ships immigrant ships, and subject them to inspection.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Will you also make two the number for the Port of London?

*MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; but if I am told there is any necessity I will look into the question.

Irish Agricultural Inspectors.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what are the names of the five agricultural inspectors under the Department in Ireland; whether their status is the same; if so, can he explain why one of these officers draws a salary of £955 per annum, in addition to a naval pension, whilst the others are paid at the rate of £300; and if the duties of these officers differ in any respect.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): There are six inspectors on the agricultural staff of the Department, viz., Mr. J. S. Gordon, chief agricultural inspector, and Messrs. E. Gallagher, J. H. Hinchcliff, T. S. Porter, A. R. Robertson, and J. Wood, agricultural inspectors. The five agricultural inspectors are all of the same status. The scale of salary of the chief agricultural inspector is £500, by increments of £20 to £700; and the scale of salary of the agricultural inspectors, except Mr. Porter, is £300, by increments of £15 to £400. The circumstances in which Mr. Porter draws a salary of £955 a year were very fully stated in my reply to the Question of the hon. Member for West Wicklow on 27th February last,† to which I beg to refer the hon. Member. Briefly, the fact is that Mr. Porter was transferred to the Department of Agriculture at his existing salary in pursuance of the Act establishing the Department. It may be noted that Mr. Porter's salary includes a subsistence allowance of £200 a year, whereas the subsistence allowances of the other inspectors are separately charged. There is no substantial difference between the duties of these officers.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: So that this gentleman is getting £955 for work for which the other inspectors only receive £300?

MR. BRYCE: I fully explained the circumstances last February.† The matter is determined by statute, and the Agricultural Department have no power over it.

Castlecomer Coalmines.

MR. MEAGHER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the year 1801 a grant of £40,000 was made by the Board of Inland Navigation for the purpose of constructing a canal to develop the coal mines of Castlecomer, and that none of that money was since received; and whether he would see his way to recommend a grant being now given to establish a railway connection with the mines, and thus support this industry.

MR. BRYCE: I have no information to the effect mentioned in the first part of the Question; but I find that on August 1st, 1904, the right hon. Member for Dover, in reply to a Question put to him by the hon. Member for Carlow,‡ stated that the hon. Member had communicated to him a statement from which it appeared that the Directors of Inland Navigation proposed to make a Grant-in-Aid, amounting to £40,000, towards the cost of construction of a canal between Monasterevan and Castlecomer, the payment to be conditional upon the execution of the work; but the money was otherwise expended, and consequently was not available for the purpose referred to. In reply to the remaining part of the Question, I fear that I can add nothing to the Answer which I gave to the hon. Member's similar Question on March 29th,§ except that I am alive to the desirability of doing whatever can be done, having regard to the funds available, for the development of these mines by proper transit facilities.

Irish Land Administration—Wandesforde Evicted Tenants.

MR. MEAGHER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any representations have been made to the Estates Commissioners on behalf of two tenants, Mrs. Meally and Edward Comerforde, for reinstatement to their holdings on the Wandesforde (Castlecomer) Estate; and, if so, what steps have been taken by the Commissioners.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1014.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxxxix., 263.

§ See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1547.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received applications for reinstatement from both of the persons named. Mrs. Meally is stated to have been evicted from the estate of Mr. William Murphy, and Comerford from the estate of Mr. R. H. P. Wandesforde. The Commissioners will inquire into both cases as soon as possible.

Sales to the Estates Commissioners—Agents' Fees.

MR. MEAGHER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that the agents for the vendors of estates sold direct to the Estates Commissioners are entitled to a scale fee or percentage, to be fixed by the Estates Commissioners, with the consent of the Treasury, under Section 23, Sub-section (11), of the Irish Land Act, 1903, he will state whether this scale fee or percentage has been fixed.

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the estates sold direct to the Estates Commissioners consist mostly of untenanted land; and has he any official information showing that the non-fixing and non-paying of the scale fee or percentage accounts in a great measure for the small amount of untenanted land which has been bought by the Estates Commissioners.

MR. BRYCE: The answer to these two Questions is contained in my reply to a Question put by the hon. and learned Member for North Westmeath on Tuesday last,† to which I beg to refer the hon. Member. The substance of it was that a scale of fees has not yet been fixed, because it is thought experience has not been sufficient, but that payments for the work done are being made, and that it is not believed that purchase has been retarded by the cause suggested.

Cork County Court Judge and Land Cases

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether in the case of a tenant named James Hurley, near Enniskean, recently before the county court judge of the west riding of the County Cork, the court valuer who valued the farm was Mr. Richard Martin, J.P.; whether Mr. Martin is father-in-law of Mr. Levis, the agent, and also a near connection of Mrs. Gash, the landlord; and, if so, will steps will be taken in future to disqualify Mr. Martin from sitting in judgment and valuing farms in the county court in such cases as he may be a relative of either landlord or agent of the estate in question?

MR. BRYCE: The county court judge informs me that he has no recollection of the case mentioned, but that he will give directions that neither of the valuers employed in his court shall inspect holdings in cases in which either the landlord or agent is related to him.

Cahir Evicted Tenant—John Horgan.

MR. EDWARD BARRY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners received particulars of his case, with a view to reinstatement, from an evicted tenant named John Horgan, Cahir, Ballineen; whether the estate of Mr. Richard T. Beamish, from which Horgan was evicted, is being sold to the tenants; and whether, seeing that a man named Timothy Crowley is in occupation of Horgan's farm, steps will be taken by the Estates Commissioners to refuse to sanction the sale of the estate unless the evicted tenant shall be included as purchaser in place of Crowley?

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that an application for reinstatement has been lodged by John Horgan; and they have also received an application from Jeremiah Horgan for the same holding. In both applications the holding is stated to be in the occupation of Timothy Crowley. Proceedings for the sale of the estate referred to have not yet been instituted. The Commissioners intend to make inquiries into the cases of all evicted tenants who have applied for reinstatement, and they will consider the question of this particular holding as soon as the estate comes before them.

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† See col. 1166–7.

Union Amalgamation—Kilkenny County Council Resolution.

MR. MEAGHER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the county council of Kilkenny have on several occasions passed resolutions in favour of the amalgamation of some of the unions in the county; if so, what steps the Local Government Board for Ireland propose to take in the matter; and will he state at what date the Report of the Viceregal Commission on Poor Law Reform may be published.

MR. BRYCE: The Local Government Board are not aware that the county council of Kilkenny have passed resolutions to the effect stated. The question of the amalgamation of unions is one of the matters dealt with by the Viceregal Commission whose Report is, I understand, in the printers' hands and is daily expected. The Local Government Board do not propose to take any steps in the matter until that Report has been received and considered.

Kilkenny Local Taxation Grants-in-Aid.

MR. MEAGHER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the amount of money contributed by the Government to the five unions in county Kilkenny in relief of local taxation respectively for the years ending 1897 and 1905; and also the amount of money raised in rates for the same periods.

MR. BRYCE: The amount of the payments from the Local Taxation Account to the five unions of county Kilkenny was, in 1897, £5,483, and in 1905, £25,394; this latter including £19,565 paid from the agricultural grant. The Local Government Board are unable to state with accuracy the amount which was raised in these unions as county cess in 1897, but they estimate that the amount was about £28,500, which added to the poor rate raised, viz., £28,666, gives a total of £57,166. The amount raised as poor rate in 1905 was £38,114.

Land Commissioners and Land Improvement.

MR. MEAGHER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the Land Commissioners have power, under Section 12, Sub-section 1, of the Irish Land Act, 1903, to improve lands purchased by them will he state how much land has been improved, drained, or reclaimed, and to what extent they have otherwise exercised the powers conferred on them by Section 12, Subsection 2, of the Act of 1903, or have the Land Commissioners issued any Return showing the amount of small or congested holdings which have been enlarged or exchanged by them.

MR. BRYCE: The information asked for cannot be conveniently given within the limits of an oral Answer, but, with the hon. Gentleman's permission, I will furnish a full reply with to-night's Votes.

Temporary Assistant Land Commission.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what are the names of all persons who have been appointed for the first time to the office of Temporary Assistant Commissioner (non-legal) in the Irish Land Commission under the Rules of March 13th 1899; the date on which each of them was appointed; whether he did or did not pass the examination for such appointments which was prescribed by the Civil Service Commissioners; and, if he did not pass it, by whom was he examined with the view of ascertaining that he possessed the qualifications required by the said Rules.

MR. BRYCE: The information asked for cannot be conveniently given within the limits of an oral Answer, and, if the Hon. Gentleman will permit me, I will furnish a printed Answer with the Votes.

Shannon Harbour Assault Case.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether Head Constable Baine, of Banagher, was assulted in Shannon Harbour by two boatmen a fortnight ago; if so, has this head constable reported the matter in the ordinary way and will he say what was the nature of the assault, and what steps the authorities are taking in this matter.

MR. BRYCE: It would appear that the hon. Member has been misinformed

The Inspector General has made enquiry from Head Constable Bane, who states that nothing in the nature of an assault upon him has taken place at Shannon Harbour or elsewhere.

MR. REDDY: The right hon. Gentleman has himself been misinformed. Will he grant an inquiry into this matter?

MR. BRYCE: I will if the hon. Member can show good cause for it.

Royal Irish Constabulary in King's County.

MR. REDDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of district inspectors of Royal Irish Constabulary and their recorded religious beliefs in King's County, also the number of sergeants in charge of Banagher district, King's County, distinguishing their religion.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary that there are five district inspectors in King's County, of whom four are recorded as Protestants and one as a Catholic. There are seven sergeants in Banagher district, of whom three are recorded as Protestants and four as Catholics.

MR. REDDY: Why are nearly all the inspectors of one religion?

MR. BRYCE: I really do not know.

Instructions to King's County Police.

MR. REDDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether Mr. Dobbyn, D.I., R.I.C., Banagher, has issued special instructions to the men under his charge in King's County on courtesy to the public, game preservation, and special exemptions to Head Constable Bane whilst on night duty; and, if so, will they be published.

MR. BRYCE: District Inspector Dobbyn states that he has not issued any special instructions to his district force upon the subjects referred to, and that he has granted no special exemption to Head Constable Bane in regard to night duty.

MR. REDDY: I can prove otherwise Will the right hon. Gentleman grant an inquiry into this?

MR. BRYCE: I will if the hon. Member can show facts proving one necessary.

MR. REDDY: I will give the right hon. Gentleman plenty.

Montgomery versus Sloan.

MR. REDDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in Moystown petty sessions, King's County, on April 25th last, in a case entitled Thomas Montgomery and the Property Defence Association versus James Sloan, Shannonbridge, the defendant was charged with threatening to shoot the complainant; and that the magistrates found the case proved, and ordered the defendant to find bail to be of good behaviour within three days; did the defendant enter into bail within the time allotted; were his firearms confiscated; and will he say who signed the justices' book.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that the facts are substantially as stated in the first part of the Question. The magistrate ordered the defendant to give bail, and at first gave him three days in which to do so, but before the rising of the court this time was extended until to-day, May 10th. The defendant is licensed to carry arms under the Peace Preservation Act, but the question of revoking his licence is under consideration. I am informed that the justices' order book is signed by General L'Estrange, Mr. Burdett, and the hon. Member himself.

MR. REDDY: The extension was made after I had signed the book.

MR. BRYCE: Then I should say that was an irregular proceeding.

Teaching in Irish.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will give Irish Members an opportunity of seeing the scheme of the National Board for the teaching of Irish in national schools before it is finally sanctioned.

Mr. BRYCE: The course suggested would be unusual and not convenient, but I shall be happy to meet the hon. Member or any of his colleagues to discuss the subject.

Irish Poor Law Reform Commission.

Mr. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when he now expects to present the Report of the Commission on Irish Poor Law Reform.

Mr. BRYCE: I cannot name a date, but I am informed that the Report is in the hands of the printer, and may be expected without delay.

Lisanover Ranch.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution from the Bawnboy Rural District Council, dealing with the council's views as to the disposal of the Lisanover ranch, near Bawnboy, referred to in the Question of the hon. Member for West Cavan, on March 19th, 1905; will the views of the local council have due consideration; and have the Estates Commissioners yet made an offer to purchase.

Mr. BRYCE: I have received the resolution referred to and will forward it to the Estates Commissioners for their consideration. The Commissioners inform me that they have not yet made a formal offer for the purchase of the property in question, but they propose to do so as soon as they have decided upon a scheme for the division of the untenanted lands and have obtained the necessary undertakings for purchase by tenants.

North Derry Election Disturbances.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it has been reported to the constabulary authorities that Mr. Robert Bailey, of Farney, county Derry, whose premises were maliciously burned down after the North Derry election, was violently assaulted on the 26th ultimo on his way home from the city of Derry by three young men; whether any arrests have been made; and, if so, what steps do the Government intend to take for the protection of Mr. Bailey from injury and persecution, his only offence apparently being that he was chairman of the Liberal committee during the election.

Mr. BRYCE: The assault was reported to the police. No arrests have been made. The Government are advised that the prosecution of the offenders should be left to Mr. Bailey, the assault not having been witnessed by the police. All necessary protection will be afforded to Mr. Bailey by the police.

Irish Board of Works.

Mr. HAZLETON (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an organised system of espionage is at present in force against the staff, including professional men and heads of branches, of the Board of Works, Dublin; whether an ex-policeman is specially detailed to watch the movements of the officials and report thereon; if so, can he say by whose authority this is being done; whether any similar system is in force in any other public department in Ireland; and whether steps will be taken to put an end to it.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): I have made inquiries and I can find no foundation for the statement that any system of espionage is in force either amongst the staff of the Board of Works or in any other public department in Ireland.

Telephone Service in County Cork.

Mr. EDWARD BARRY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether any inquiries have yet been made in the principal towns of South and West Cork with a view to ascertaining whether the necessary local support may be available for the purpose of extending the telephone service to those districts; whether the inquiries, if made, have been found satisfactory; and, if so, will steps be taken to include South and West Cork in the forthcoming scheme recently promised to Killarney and other southern centres.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, TowerHamlets, Poplar): Instructions have been given for a canvass in the district referred to to ascertain how many persons are willing to subscribe to telephone exchanges. No time will be lost in coming to a decision on the results of the inquiry.

Telephone Service between Belfast and Dromore.

MR. LIDDELL (Down, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that inconvenience is being caused to the public and business men of Dromore, county Down, through the inefficiency of the telephone service between Belfast and Dromore; and that, although the Dromore Urban Council and merchants have made numerous representations to the National Telephone Company, no effort has been made to remedy the grievances complained of; and whether he will take steps to have the matters complained of remedied.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Telephonic communication between Dromore and Belfast takes place entirely by means of the National Telephone Company's exchange system in the Belfast area, and does not involve the use of any Post Office lines. I have received no complaints in regard to the rates. If, however, any representations are made to me on the subject, I will have inquiry made.

The Stibbert Bequest.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Prime Minister if he can state the attitude of the Government in reference to the bequest to the British Nation of armour and works of art by the late Mr. Stibbert, of Florence.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): I understand that the late Mr. Stibbert's intention to bequeath his collection to the British Nation was notified to the late Government, and gratefully accepted by them. Negotiations with his executors are now proceeding with a view to the fulfilment of his wishes.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: When will the result of the negotiations be made known?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot say.

AN HON. MEMBER: Will the Government urge the trustees of this splendid bequest to the British nation that the curator shall be a British subject? This is a matter of much interest to the community of Florence.

SIR H. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: I do not know that this Question arises out of the original Question, but I should be glad to give an Answer as far as I have the information at my disposal.

MR. WEIR inquired whether the Government would see to it that the curator was able to speak the Italian language fluently.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There are many British subjects who can speak the Italian language quite as fluently as their own.

Private Property at Sea—Immunity from Capture.

MR. BRIGHT (Oldham): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of the second Hague Conference, he is prepared to appoint inter-departmental Committees to consider the immunity of private property from capture at sea, and the feasibility of a reciprocal limitation of naval armaments; and whether it is practicable to approach Foreign Governments with specific proposals on either of these subjects.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, Sir, an inter-departmental Committee will be appointed to consider the question of the immunity of private property from capture at sea. And with regard to the limitation of armaments I would refer my hon. friend to the statement made last night on behalf of the Government by my right hon. friend the Foreign Secretary.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) asked whether the subject of dealing with the immunity of private property at sea was not one for the Defence Committee.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Entirely; but I understand that this is a preliminary inquiry among the Departments concerned, with a view to a decision by the Defence Committee.

Chinese Crime in the Transvaal.

*MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether his attention has been called to an official Return, sent by Lord Selborne to Lord Elgin, which shows that the monthly number of Chinese deserting from the Rand mines has risen from 245 in July to 780 in January, and that nearly 140 serious crimes, including several murders, have been perpetrated by the Chinese upon the inhabitants of the Transvaal during the last nine months; whether he is aware that numerous public meetings have been held to entreat the protection of the Government, and that last week a deputation of Colonists waited upon the High Commissioner for the same purpose; whether he has been informed that Lord Selborne, in reply, admitted the danger to the lives of the wives and children of the Colonists from the Chinese marauders, and said that the Goverment would arm every man with guns or rifles against them within ten miles of the Rand; whether there is any precedent for the Imperial Government sanctioning such a policy in a British Colony; and whether His Majesty's Government proposes to tolerate further this state of things.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The facts appear to be generally as stated in my hon. friend's Question, though I am informed that the Secretary of State has not, as yet, received an official account of the proceedings connected with the deputation to Lord Selborne. The question of the means to be taken for securing the more efficient control of the Chinese has formed the subject of local inquiry and discussion, as my hon. friend was informed on the 2nd instant,† and the Secretary of State is expecting to learn from Lord Selborne shortly the additional measures which may be decided upon, more particularly for the control of the Chinese in the mine premises. Pending the receipt of this report, the Secretary of State is not in a position to express any final opinion.

*MR. MACKARNESS: Is there any precedent for arming British colonists against the foreign employees of a particular industry?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I had omitted to notice that part of the Question. If the hon. Member will put it down again I will endeavour to answer it.

Divisions.

MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether, with a view to the saving of the time of the House, the progress of public business, and the comfort of Members, it is possible to improve upon the present method of taking divisions; and whether he can see his way to invite the House to give authority to the Speaker, or other presiding Chairman, when Members are assembled for a division, and a Question is put from the Chair, to call for a show of hands upon it, as is done in all other assemblies, and if there is an unmistakable majority for or against, to accept that as the decision of the House, which would then only have actually to divide when no such majority had been given.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Government are ready to consider any proposals designed to reduce the very grave inconvenience to which my hon. friend refers, with a view to submitting those which appear most practicable to the Committee on Precedure at a later stage. My right hon. friend the First Commissioner of Works is also considering the various structural problems involved in the changes suggested. We are very keenly alive to the importance of the Question.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the great importance of allowing representatives to register their names and votes.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I should think that the power of enabling a Member to register his vote immediately would probably involve that each Member should have a seat allocated to him as is the case in most assemblies elsewhere. This would involve an entire change of the arrangements of the House, as well as of the manner of conducting our debates, and very nearly all the habits, whether good or bad, we have through many centuries acquired. I think that this fact must be borne in mind before we leap to the conclusion that such an arrangement is possible.

MR. DILLON: I am content with the present system, but all I ask is whether the right hon. Gentleman will keep in mind the great importance of seeing that each representative gets into the public Press some statement of how he votes in each division.

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† See Col. 551.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I appreciate that view, and I hope we shall do nothing to invalidate in any repect the present system so far as it secures the publication of votes in the House.

Sea Erosion.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state when it is proposed to appoint the Royal Commission to inquire into the defence of the coast from sea erosion, and other kindred subjects.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that the names of the Commissioners will shortly be submitted to His Majesty, and I quite hope that an announcement may be made in the course of a few days.

GOVERNMENT AND UNEMPLOYED.

MR. O'GRADY asked the President of the Local Government Board whether he had received an application to meet, on Monday next, a deputation from London unemployed men and women with reference to promised Amendments in the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905; and whether he had replied to the request, and, if not, why not; whether a similar application had been made on behalf of a conference of London Distress Committees held two weeks ago at St. Pancras Town Hall.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The Prime Minister and myself have received a request from the conference of distress committees suggesting that a deputation should be allowed to wait on us. A similar request has reached us from the Right to Work Council. The Prime Minister has replied that no useful purpose will be served by receiving such deputations, as, with respect to London, the Government are waiting for the report of the London Central Unemployed Body, and, with respect to the whole country, the Question is under consideration.

MR. O'GRADY asked whether the request did not come from unemployed workmen and women.

MR. JOHN BURNS said he had received no application from unemployed men and women.

MR. O'GRADY: Was not the request signed by my hon. friend the Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow and Mr. Frank Smith, on behalf of the unemployed men and women, and not on behalf of the Right to Work Society?

MR. JOHN BURNS: These gentlemen signed the request on behalf of the Right to Work Council.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: What was the request made in the letter?

MR. JOHN BURNS: The request was to receive a deputation from the Right to Work Council, to consider a number of proposals. I shall be glad to send the hon. Member a copy of the request.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Will my right hon. friend receive a deputation from the unemployed men and women who are to meet on Monday to appoint a deputation?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I can add nothing to my original Answer. The Prime Minister and myself replied promptly and courteously in answer to the requests from the two bodies.

MR. O'GRADY rose to put another Question, when Mr. Lonsdale, on a point of order, asked whether it was in accordance with the rules of the House that Questions of this sort should be asked after 3.45.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member submitted his Question to me, and I thought it was of an urgent character. But some of the Questions which have arisen out of it can hardly be called urgent.

MR. O'GRADY said the Answer of the right hon. Gentleman was very unsatisfactory. When might the House expect the Government's proposals for the

Amendment of the Unemployed Workmen Act ?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of that.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I desire to ask the Prime Minister a Question arising out of a notice that appears for the first time on the Paper to-day. It is a notice "to call attention to the case of Mrs. Eva D'Angely, to the conduct of the Metropolitan Police, and to the decision of the Court in connection therewith." That is, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, what in the last Parliament was called "a blocking notice," and under that term came in for a great number of opprobrious epithets from the right hon. Gentleman and his friends. I understand that the Home Secretary has deferred answering Questions on this subject, which excites a great deal of interest, and this notice will prevent the question from being discussed on a Motion for the adjournment of the House, should that course be thought desirable. In these circumstances I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it would not be a convenient course to put down the Home Office Vote on Tuesday next for the purpose of discussing this single Question. That would be more satisfactory than a Motion for the adjournment; but if the Government refuse that better course, I hope they will see that the other course is not barred by the action of their friends.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not observe this notice of Motion, and I had no knowledge that it was on the Paper, or of the circumstances in which it was put down. As to the deferring of the Questions on the Paper until Monday, of that also I had no knowledge, except that the Home Secretary told me of it this morning and said that those who had put down the Questions had deferred them till Monday of their own accord. With regard to putting down the Home Office Vote on Monday, we had made other arrangements, and I do not know how far the negotiations have gone, or whether it is possible to make the alteration suggested by the right hon. Gentleman. But, if it is possible, it shall be fully considered. As to business, perhaps I may say that we had proposed to take on Monday the Finance Bill, but circumstances have arisen to make it more convenient to take that Bill on Wednesday. On Monday we shall take the Second Reading of the Plural Voters Bill; on Tuesday, subject to the suggested arrangement, Class I. of the Civil Service Estimates (Public Works), and on Thursday Irish Supply.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman has met me in a fair spirit; but I hope it is understood that the right hon. Gentleman will endeavour as far as he can to allow the ordinary course with regard to the adjournment to take place on Monday, or will make the arrangement I have suggested for Tuesday. The House will feel that one of those courses should be adopted. As to the Finance Bill, I suppose that the right hon. Gentleman does not expect to take the Second Reading in half a day. I never heard of the Second Reading of such a Bill being got through in less than a whole day.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is aware that he himself and others proclaimed this to be an exceptionally humdrum and commonplace Budget, the common property of all parts of the House. I merely mention that as making a little distinction.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I repudiate any share in that.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman says with regard to the other matter that there are two courses—either to put down the Home Office Vote on Tuesday, or that I should make arrangements for a Motion for the adjournment of the House on Monday. I never heard before of a Leader of the House and the head of the Government making arrangements for a Motion of adjournment directed against his own Government. I should have thought that the right hon. Gentleman would not so far forestall the future as to declare that there is to be a Motion for the adjournment before he knows what Answer is to be given by the Home Secretary to the Questions on the Paper.

Those Answers may be perfectly satisfactory to the right hon. Gentleman and his friends.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I admit that possibility, and I hope it will occur; but unless the notice on the Paper is withdrawn, however unsatisfactory the Answer of the right hon. Gentleman may be, it will not be possible for any gentleman interested to move the adjournment, and that contingency I hope the right hon. Gentleman will remember.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This incident of a Motion's being put down is a surprise to me; but I will look up the precedents. I am always anxious to follow the example of my predecessors as far as I can, and if I find such a course as the right hon. Gentleman suggests is justified by the action of my immediate predecessor I shall be glad to follow it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman is fully justified in what he has said, and I hope he will look up his own statements and appeals on similar occasions. I may say that never under any circumstances should I myself have refused to give an early date for the discussion of a subject in which I believed the House to be interested in connection with the action of a Minister of the Crown.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps I may be allowed to repeat my statement that it all depends upon the Answers given, and if those Answers are entirely satisfactory, where arises the necessity for our now taking the Home Office Vote?

STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRADE, ETC.

Ordered, That leave be given to the Standing Committee on trade, etc., to sit during the Sitting of the House on Monday next for the consideration of the Land Tenure Bill.—(*Sir Thomas Esmonde.*)

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL.

Ordered, That the Lords' Amendments be considered.—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

Lords' Amendments considered accordingly, and agreed to.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (ENGLAND AND WALES.)

Return ordered, "showing for London, for England and Wales, excluding London, and for the two together, the approximate number of the local authorities which had financial transactions during the year 1904–5, and the number of such authorities whose accounts are subject to audit by district auditors; also showing, in the case of the last-mentioned authorities, whether the accounts are audited yearly or half-yearly"—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill—Sir Edward Strachey; and had appointed in substitution Mr. Munro Ferguson.

Report to lie upon the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY reported from the Chairmen's Panel that they had appointed Mr. Laurence Hardy to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in the place of Sir Thomas Esmonde, at the conclusion of the proceedings on the Land Tenure Bill.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

STREET BETTING BILL.

"To provide for the suppression of Betting in Streets and other public places," presented by Mr. Yoxall; supported by Mr. Cave, Mr. Channing, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Osmond Williams, and

Mr. Wood; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 18th, and to be printed. [Bill 201.]

TELEGRAPH (CONSTRUCTION) BILL.

"To amend the Telegraph Acts, 1863 to 1894, with respect to the construction and maintenance of telegraphic lines," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 202.]

MARRIAGE WITH FOREIGNERS BILL.

"To enable the Law with respect to Marriages between British Subjects and Foreigners," presented by Mr. Herbert Samuel; supported by Secretary Sir Edward Grey; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed [Bill 203.]

STREET TRAFFIC REGULATION BILL.

"To enable public authorities to prohibit one person from having charge of two horses and two vehicles," presented by Mr. Shackleton; supported by Mr. Crooks, Mr. Gill, Mr. Snowden, Mr. Charles Duncan, Mr. James Haslam, and Mr. Steadman; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 204.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Ordered, That the proceedings on the Education (England and Wales) Bill have precedence this day of the Business of Supply.—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL).

Ordered, That the proceedings on the Second Reading of the Education (England and Wales) Bill, if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House.)—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

SUNDAY TRADING (JOINT COMMITTEE).

Ordered, That Sir Henry Kimber be discharged from the Joint Committee on Sunday Trading.

Ordered, That Sir George Doughty be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

> "To leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): As this House is already aware, my colleagues and I of the Irish Party intend, as this Bill now presents itself to us, to vote against the Second Reading, and I am anxious before we come to a decision to make some sort of answer to the very forcible and plausible appeal which has been made to us in part across the floor of this House and more fully in very many communications that I have received from admitted friends of Ireland in various parts of the country, who have asked me whether it is necessary that the Irish Party should take this action in view of the following facts—firstly, that this Bill is promoted by a majority admittedly friendly to Ireland; secondly, that it is opposed by that Party in the House which is, I may say, the traditional enemy of Irish popular rights; thirdly, that our support of the Education Bill of 1902 alienated the friendship of many friends of Ireland and that, so far as the interests of the Catholic schools of England are concerned, that we did them no service, and that in point of fact the Act of 1902 made the presentation this year of a similar Bill inevitable; and, finally, we are asked whether we, claiming to be Home Rulers, and asking that we should have sole control of purely Irish affairs—we are asked whether we, taking up that position, ought to interfere in a matter of this kind affecting England and Wales solely, and whether we ought not to abstain and leave English and Welsh Members to settle it for themselves. No doubt that is a very forcible and plausible appeal to make to us, and I admit to the full that there is a great deal of truth contained in it. But I respectfully submit to hon. Members in all parts of the House that if this Bill contravened, as we rightly or wrongly believe it does contravene, a fundamental principle to which Ireland is and always has been devoted, to sustain which our constituencies have elected us to Parliament, and a principle which has been supported by every Irish Party which has appeared upon the floor of this House—if that be so, then I respectfully say that I am sure no man will be found in any part of the House to say to us that we should palter with a great principle to which we are devoted, that we should sacrifice a great principle to which we are devoted, because of the fear, or, if you like, of the certainty that by so doing we would alienate the sympathy of some friends, or even, to put an extreme case, that we would postpone the concession of justice to our country. We in the Irish Party have always held the view that in the long run Ireland has nothing to lose, nothing to fear, by standing boldly and frankly by her principles, even though by so doing from time to time a temporary prejudice may be aroused against her cause. This Irish Party is not a Party of opportunism or of expediency. Had it been so, how different would have been our attitude on the Boer War. Remember what happened. Then we stood alone in this House. [Cries of "No."] I am not forgetting anything. I say we stood alone in this House in protesting against that war, with a few honourable exceptions, but so few that my statement is substantially accurate. We united against us both the great Parties in this House. [Cries of "No."] We had the courage of our convictions, and went into the Division Lobby—and that is the test—in opposition to the Vote of the money necessary for the carrying on of that war, though I admit there were Liberal Members who supported us. Still, I repeat the statement that, broadly speaking, we united both the Parties in this House against us, and some of the very best Home Rulers in Parliament, and some of the very best and most sincere friends of Ireland in this Parliament appealed to us again and again, and warned us that if we persisted in that course we would do irreparable injury to the chances of the concession of Irish rights. We stood firmly by our principles, and to-day I make bold to say that we are not weaker; I believe we are stronger because, in that trying time, we had the courage of our convictions, and proved our consistency. To-day, I do not really believe that Ireland will lose a single friend, though I admit there may be some irritation—temporary irritation—among some of our friends. I do not believe Ireland will lose a single friend by open and candid adherence to principle. On the contrary, knowing, as every man in every quarter of this House does know, what our principle upon this education question is, it does seem to me that we should receive, and we certainly should merit, the contempt of every honest man, if we sacrificed that principle because we thought that adherence to it would lead us into temporary conflict with those who we know are the best friends of Ireland upon the great question of self-government. This is not an occasion on which there can by any possibility be any evasion or deceit. We who represent Ireland are, and always have been, denominationalists in principle upon this elementary education question. We believe, rightly or wrongly, that religion is not only a necessary part, but the most necessary of the education of children. That with us is a fundamental principle; it is a fundamental principle of the religion which is the religion of the majority of our Members, though not of all. It is more than that. It is, I believe, the fundamental principle of the whole Irish people of all creeds and clauses in Ireland. When hon. Members talk about the importance from a practical point of view of settling the great education question on denominational lines, I point to the fact, as was done by the Member for Cambridge University, that in Ireland, whatever you may call it, in practice you have a great denominational system of elementary education. And I say that if this Bill were directed against that system in Ireland, if the attempt were made to uproot that system in Ireland, you would be confronted with a union of all creeds in Ireland to resist such proposals to the utmost. We have been told that a settlement on denominational lines is impossible. For myself I do not admit it and I do not believe it. We are told it is impracticable, but I notice that while great stress is laid upon the example of what are called the new democracies in the Empire, and upon the example of

America, nothing is said about the example of one of the greatest of the new democracies of the Empire, namely, Canada. What is the case to-day in Ontario and Quebec? There is in those great provinces to-day the denominational system in force. There are different sets of schools supported by the State; the ratepapers in those cases when they are paying their rates are obliged to fill in a form stating to what denomination they desire their money to go; then it is collected and given to that denomination, and if it is found at the end of the year that any particular denomination has not received sufficient for the needs of its school then the deficit has to be supplied by the denomination itself. That in Quebec and Ontario has proved a settlement. I do not know whether you will say it is an impracticable settlement here, even if you have no objection to the principle; but I do say that, so far as Catholics are concerned in this country, a system of that kind would meet their case. It is a very remarkable fact which I have gathered from statements made to me by persons high in authority and with good knowledge to enable them to give a correct statement—it is a remarkable fact that I am told that the rates and taxes—the educational rates and taxes—paid by the Catholics of England, would, if pooled together, be sufficient to provide for the wants of every Catholic school in England. That is a statement worth testing, and I invite some examination of it. If the statement is true, then what becomes of the argument that you cannot give us what we want because the Protestants of various denominations will not agree to pay for the teaching of a religion they do not believe in? If my statement is true, no Protestant of any denomination is asked to pay one single sixpence for the teaching of the Catholic religion at these schools. And so strongly am I impressed with the accuracy of the statement I have made that I do not hesitate to say that the Catholics would take the risk, and that if you could to-morrow ear-mark all the educational rates and taxes paid by the Catholics in England, and devote them to the assistance of the Catholic schools, then if that were not enough, and there was a deficit, we would take the risk. We would bear it ourselves. It has been said repeatedly that because we on these benches are Home Rulers, therefore we ought to let England decide this question for herself Let me say, we do not want to interfere in the slightest degree with any decision which the majority — the Protestant majority—of England may come to as to the control, management, and teaching of the schools. If the majority of the Protestants of England—in which term I include the various denominations—choose to set up in their schools a system of simple Bible teaching under what is called the Cowper-Temple clause, we do not object. So far as I can make out—I say it with great diffidence, and I hope I will not give offence unwittingly to anybody representing any section—as far as I can make out from what I have read and heard in this debate, there does not seem to be any real or vital or fundamental objection to this simple Bible teaching on the part of any Protestant—Nonconformist or Churchman. I know that when the hon. Member for East Mayo made a similar statement yesterday it was pointed out that certain Churchmen only accepted this Bible teaching as a foundation, a something better than nothing. I beg, as I say with great diffidence and with not full knowledge, but from what I have heard, to say that, so far as this House is concerned, the great majority of the Protestant Members are satisfied to put this simple Bible teaching into the schools, that so far as the minority are concerned, they say, "We are not satisfied with that, though still admitting that this simple Bible teaching is better than nothing." That is not the position of Catholics on this matter. As the hon. Member for East Mayo said yesterday and I repeat his phrase, there is an impassable gulf between the Protestant Communions and the Catholics. With us, it is not at all a question of the sufficiency of this teaching; it is not at all a question of its adequacy; it is a difference—a vital difference—of principle. We regard this simple Bible teaching given under the Cowper-Temple Clause—not as inadequate or insufficient; rightly or wrongly we regard it as bad, as hostile; we regard it as abhorrent to our religious convictions and in great part as hostile to our religion. Manifestly the overwhelming majority of hon. Members will think we are quite wrong and will entirely disagree with us. That is not the point. If we conscientiously believe that the teaching is not merely inadequate but bad and opposed to our religious convictions and to our religion, then I say most respectfully that to come to our children and to say to them, first of all, you must, under a compulsory system, go to school, and secondly, when you get to that school you must submit to this simple Bible teaching or go without religion altogether, is nothing short of religious tyranny. We, therefore, interfere in this matter not to prevent in the slightest degree the Protestant majority of England doing what it chooses in the schools, but to prevent a system being forced upon the Catholic minority which that minority declares violates its conscientious convictions.

The Act of 1902 imposed certain disabilities and grievances upon the Nonconformist body in all single school districts. The President of the Board of Trade handsomely admitted the other night that in endeavouring to ward off that mischief the only section from which the Nonconformists got any assistance was the Irish Members; and he paid a handsome compliment to the hon. Member for East Mayo who did make a proposal at that time which, at any rate, would have mitigated this grievance. There is not a man sitting on the Irish Benches who did not admit that grievance and regret it; and I need not say that any legislative proposal to lift that burden off the shoulders of the Nonconformists will have the unanimous support of the Irish Party. But we ask you as well, in removing this grievance, as you are entitled to do, that you should not impose a fresh grievance upon others.

We have another right to interfere. This Catholic minority in England of which I am speaking is an Irish minority. There are, of course, English Catholics; they are not very numerous; they are a small proportion of the Catholics of England; they are for the most part rich men, men high in station and in wealth. That is to say, they are not men who would, in their own persons and the persons of their children, suffer from this Bill, because they have ample means to provide religious education elsewhere than in those schools for their children. I say, speaking of the Catholics of England who will be personally hit by this Bill in the country—whose children go to these schools, they are all Irish. They are people who have been driven from their own country to these shores by that very system of misgovernment which you to-day repudiate and condemn. Their presence in England seriously affects more than one English problem. Their presence in England affects your industrial policy; it affects the question of the unemployed; it affects to some extent this education question. I ask you not to forget that these men are here at all because they have been driven from their own land where they have been unable to earn a living—that land whose industries over 200 years ago were deliberately suppressed by Act of the English Parliament. And do not forget, further, that these people out of their poverty—and no one will deny they are the poorest of the poor—have spent in the building and maintenance of the schools for their children between £4,000,000 and £5,000,000. Do not forget the impassable gulf to which I have alluded between their religious convictions and yours, and then do not expect us, who feel we represent them in this House, to abstain from aiding them in their effort to maintain a system of religious training for their children. The plea is made that as Home Rulers we ought to abstain and let English Members settle the matter for themselves. This far I may certainly go. So far as I understand it, the Welsh clause moves in the direction of Home Rule for Wales in educational matters, and I think the President of the Board of Trade and the Welsh Members may take it from us that when that proposal comes up, if we understand it properly now, and I am sure the right hon. Gentleman correctly interpreted it the other night in his speech, he will not find any objection from us to placing in the hands of the Welsh people the control of their education. But the proposal to ask us to abstain altogether from discussion and opposition will not hold water. Let hon. Members remember we are here against our will. Give us control of our own Irish affairs and we will be only too glad to give up all possible interference in the managing of purely English or Welsh or Scotch affairs. Remember it rests with you, but so long as you insist upon keeping us here as Members of this Imperial Parliament, and refuse to let us control our own affairs, do not complain if we interfere and act upon the merits of questions such as this when they come up.

I was arguing the other day with a very powerful Noncomformist on the question of further University facilities for Ireland. He was a Home Ruler; he was a man who had been an enthusiastic supporter of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1893, under which the Irish people would have had the power given them to settle this University question according to their own ideas. I asked my friend why it was that having voted in favour of those Bills he still refused persistently to consent to this University question being settled according to our ideas in the Imperial Parliament? And he replied by saying—

> "Oh, I was willing and am willing to give you Home Rule and to let you settle this question for yourselves, but so long as you remain Members of the Imperial Parliament I must judge this question on its merits, and I am against a new University for Ireland."

Now, I say, with the greatest respect, what right has a gentleman who takes up such a line of argument with reference to this question, to say to me that I am bound as a Home Ruler to abstain from interference in the settlement of an English question? I am a Home Ruler and the Irish Party are Home Rulers. We want to go back to the management of Irish affairs in Ireland, and to leave the settlement of these English affairs to English representatives, but you insist upon keeping us here, and you refuse to let us manage our own affairs. In the circumstances you cannot complain if, on occasions such as this, we exercise our rights in examining measures of this kind, even if they affect only one portion of the United Kingdom.

Now, Sir, what is our claim? That claim was put before the House yesterday by the hon. Member for East Mayo in very precise and accurate form. He felt it his duty to place this claim upon paper, and he read it out to the House. That was a claim put forward on behalf of the whole Irish Party in the House. Let me repeat it in more general terms and without any pretence to the precision used by the hon. Member for East Mayo. Let me say, first of all, what it is we do not ask, and then what it is we do ask. I have said that we do not ask to dictate to the majority or to any section of the Protestant people of England as to the teaching they should give to their children. If they desire to have the Cowper-Temple teaching in their schools, if it meets their wishes we will not attempt to prevent them from having it. Further, we do not object to local control of secular education. There is a great deal of talk about mandate. I will not be guilty of the hypocrisy to pretend that the Liberal majority did not receive a mandate from the country on the subject of local control of secular education. I admit that they did, and I admit further that they received a mandate to the effect that a man's creed should not be an absolute bar to his employment as a teacher. But I deny altogether that there was any mandate from the country that there should be local control of the religious teaching to be given to children, or that there was any mandate forcing the Government to the folly, the grotesque folly, of putting Protestant teachers into schools to teach Catholic doctrines, or putting Christian teachers into Jewish schools to teach Jewish doctrines. We do not, therefore, object to local control of secular teaching, we do not object to what you call the abolition of tests in the teaching profession so long as the provision of that is guided by reason and common sense, and so long as there are adequate safeguards to prevent the grotesque absurdity of sending into schools a Catholic teacher to teach Protestant doctrines or *vice versa.* Sir, we claim that that clause of the Bill should be made a reality. I do not know whether the Minister of Education has got so tired of hearing his own words to the Jews quoted that he will resent my quoting them again. My position is this, that if the right hon. Gentleman in that speech accurately represented and interpreted the intention of the Government, then all he has to do is to put that intention into the Bill and he will meet the really crucial points in this case. What did he say? He said—

> "Assuming the provisions of Clause 4 with reference to non-provided schools not to be illusory (and of course if they were illusory they would be a fraud), the Jewish body would benefit more largely than any other body. But it was pointed out that it was not a complete protection, because it was not obligatory on the local authority to pay attention to the deputation's demands. It was obligatory on the local authority to ascertain the facts, and if four-fifths of the parents of the children desired facilities it was an obligation upon the local authority. Of course, the local authority, if so minded, might disregard the fair intention of the statute and obstinately hold aloof from doing anything further. He would take

care that their view that a statutory obligation should be imposed upon the local authority to do its duty was put before his colleagues."

On that part of Clause 4, the right hon. Gentleman clearly states what the intention of the Government is. He equally clearly stated that the intention may be thwarted under the Bill, and intimated that he would press upon his colleagues the necessity to make this statutory and obligatory so that the intention of Parliament might not be thwarted or trampled under foot where the local authority might be governed by cranks or bigots. Do not let any man who hears these words misunderstand them. I have confidence in the elected public bodies of this country. I do believe honestly that in the overwhelming majority of cases, guided by the advice from the Education Department, they would in all probability carry out the intentions of the Government, but I cite the Education Minister himself as my witness when I say that in all human probability there would be exceptions. What country in the world is there that is free from cranks and bigots? What country in the world is there where you will find no local authority temporarily giving way to the noise of cranks or bigots, and so long as that loop-hole remains in that portion of the clause I think we cannot be expected to accept it as satisfactory. Let me come now to the next portion of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman.

"With regard to the Jewish teachers,"

he said—

"the words in Clause 4 might require strengthening."

Will the House pay attention to this—

"But the intention was that the schools should be carried on just as they were now. He agreed that there was a loophole for any amount of pigheaded obstinacy, and denominational bigotry, and jealousy, and unfairness, but it was certainly the intention of the clause that the teachers should remain the same as they were, those who were alone qualified to give the particular religious instruction which hitherto had been given in the school."

Is that a test? [Cries of "Yes!"] Then that is the intention of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman says that the intention of the Government is that this teaching shall be carried on by those alone qualified to give it, that is to say by the present teachers, and it must necessarily follow that where vacancies arise from death or illness those vacancies will be filled up by men equally qualified. These are the claims upon Clause 4. I repeat that if the right hon. Gentleman's speech really and accurately represents the intentions of the Government all he has to do is to put it into the Bill and certainly upon the crucial points he will satisfy us.

But, Mr. Speaker, the trouble is, it is not in the Bill. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman will make any statement to-night or not, but as the Bill stands, that avowed intention of the Government is not carried out, and so long as this is the case we are bound to go into the Division Lobby in opposition to the measure. I do not know, as I say, whether the right hon. Gentleman will speak, and if he does I do not know whether he will consider it wise to make any statement upon this question. But what I ask is, do his words as reported and quoted represent the real intention of the Government, and if so, is he prepared to maintain that that clause is to give effect to it? If this is made right, I have no hesitation in saying that I believe an accommodation can be arrived at with reference to the numerous other questions where we see great objection to the provisions of the Bill as it stands. I had intended to have spoken on some of those points, such as the question of the four-fifths, the question of the 5,000 limit, the question of the exclusion of rural areas, and also the vital question of the treatment of trusts, and above all of endowments. I do not, I confess, thoroughly understand how they are affected by the clauses in this Bill, but so far as I do understand the matter, and as far as I have been advised, the Bill stands at the present moment in a most unsatisfactory condition upon these points. I would have been glad if I had the opportunity of speaking for a few moments upon these matters, but I must bring my remarks to a close, because these matters, always of vital importance, I regard as subsidiary in this sense, that if we can be met in Clause 4 in the way indicated, I am convinced we shall have no difficulty in Committee in arriving at a fair settlement upon the other points.

Let me conclude by making a very brief appeal to the great Liberal Nonconformist majority in this House. I would say to them that their power is enormous. I heard the threat that was levelled against them yesterday by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, I heard the right hon. Gentleman threaten them with the House of Lords, I heard him threaten them with what the House of Lords would do, and I heard him prophesy that when the House of Lords drove them to the country upon this Bill their majority would be dispersed.

A UNIONIST MEMBER: So it would.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: "So it would," says an hon. Member here. I take leave to say to the great Liberal Nonconformist majority that if they are only magnanimous and moderate in this matter, they can afford to despise the threats from West Birmingham. I believe they are strong enough to disregard those threats. I do most earnestly beg of them not to forget that the Catholic Irishmen of Great Britain at the last general election trusted them and contributed something, at any rate, to build up that great strength which is at their disposal to-day. You Liberal Nonconformists' have something more precious than great electoral and Parliamentary strength. You have a proud history associated with heroic struggle in defence of civil and religious liberty. You have a glorious tradition in brave endurance of persecution for conscience' sake. Again I beg of you not to forget that these men for whom we speak have similar traditions—aye, traditions of even greater persecution for conscience' sake going on through centuries in the past. Do not forget—may I beg hon. Members not to forget—that religious intolerance is not characteristic of the Catholics of Ireland. Let me read for you a few words of the great Protestant historian, Mr. Lecky—

> "Among Irish Catholics, religious intolerance has never been a prevailing vice, and those who have studied closely the history and characteristics of the Irish people can hardly fail to be struck with the deep respect for sincere religion in every form which they have commonly evinced. Their original conversion to Christianity was accompanied by less blood-shed than that of any equally considerable nation in Europe, and in spite of the fearful calamities which followed the Reformation it is a memorable fact that not a single Protestant suffered for his religion in Ireland during all the period of the Marian persecution in England."

Sir, I appeal therefore on behalf of a people who have some claim for assistance and sympathy from the Ministerial side of the House. I appeal on behalf of a small and poor Irish minority in this land. I appeal on behalf of the children of men who were driven to your shores as I have already said by that very system of misgovernment which you acknowledge and which you repudiate and denounce. In exercising and putting in operation your enormous, your giant strength, I beseech of you by the very tenderness of the deepseated religious convictions of these men—these men, whose fathers sacrificed property and liberty and life in defence of their faith—these men who themselves to-morrow, if the need arose, would be prepared to make equal sacrifices to maintain the religious training of their children.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): I think the House may be congratulated on the moderate and reasonable tone which has been the general characteristic of this debate in all quarters, and which has never been more conspicuously illustrated than by the moving and powerful speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. We have had, I am glad to think, no echo, or only the faintest echo, within these walls, of the intemperate and violent language which reverberated through the country during the Easter recess. I am far, of course, from drawing the inference from the relatively low temperature which has happily distinguished our discussion that there is either any lack of sincerity or slackening of determination in the hostility which is felt in some quarters of the House to the Bill; and my object in intervening—an intervention which I am glad to say will be of the briefest—is to endeavour, if I can, even at this stage, to remove honest misconceptions that still prevail both as to the intentions and as to the effects of our proposals. I start with the admissions made yesterday by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham—whom I am sorry not to see in his place—in a most important and striking speech, a speech in which the right hon. Gentleman, no doubt, said many hard things about this Bill, but which, at the same time, contained almost the strongest testimony that has been offered in the course of this debate—all the more effective because it was only half-conscious—both to the necessity and to the essential reasonableness of this legislation. What were the right hon. Gentleman's admissions? The first was that the Act of 1902 created and left behind it a grievance which it was the obvious duty of statesmanship to take the first opportunity to remove. Stated in a sentence, that grievance is this—that as regards a large number, indeed the majority, of the elementary schools, which were henceforward to be maintained exclusively at the public cost, the public authority was to be represented only by a minority upon the management; that with respect to religious teaching there was to be no alternative between sectarian instruction on the one side and no instruction on the other; and that, as regards the profession of teaching, to be remunerated henceforward entirely by the State, and by the State alone, the teacher was, or at any rate might be, debarred from employment and promotion by the application of denominational tests. And what is the remedy for this grievance? I will not attempt the task of disentangling the various composing strands of the mandate that was given to the majority at the last election. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said that this country could give only one mandate for one purpose at one time. From that I entirely differ. I think this House of Commons came back from the country clothed with authority to accomplish a number of reforms. But as regards the education question, I venture to say there is no one that followed the course of the election who will dispute that the remedy for the grievance was to be found, in the opinion of the vast majority of the electors, in the adoption of the two principles which are called popular control and the abolition of tests. The point I want to put to those who are opposing the Bill is this. Of course, if you will not accept popular control and the abolition of tests, this Bill cannot possibly approve itself to you; but if you will take for granted as the starting-point of the argument that these two principles have to receive legislative embodiment, then starting from that point of new departure, I want to say, not in reference to the details, which are no doubt capable of amendment and improvement, but if you look to the main lines, the essential features and the fundamental provisions of the Bill, there is no other practical way of attacking the problem.

Let me try to make that good. First of all, as to popular control. If there is to be popular control in any effective sense that clearly involves the transfer not, indeed, of the property, but of the management and direction of every elementary school which depends on the State for its support, from a private to a public authority. No one can dispute that. Well, that is done by the earlier provisions of this Bill. There is no interference with property at all. But provision is made that, on five days of the week, and during the school hours of each day, the school premises shall be at the disposal of the local authorities for the purposes of public elementary education, the trustees of the school retaining not only the property, but the complete, undivided, and exclusive user of it for every other purpose of their trust at all other times. That is what is contemplated in the normal case, when agreement is made after negotiation between the trustees on one side and the local authority on the other. And what is the consideration? First, there is to be an adequate rent; next, there is to be a complete transfer from the trustees to the local authority of the whole burden of maintaining the fabric for all purposes; and, finally, it may be made a condition of the arrangement by the trustees, if they are so minded, that facilities should be provided for the instruction of the children, whose parents require it, in the special creed or formularies of the sect to which the school belongs. I was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham yesterday say that under this Bill, while the teaching of what is called Cowper-Temple religion is compulsory, the granting of facilities to denominations was permissive. Exactly the reverse is the case. There is no compulsion of any sort or kind to teach Cowper-Temple religion. The local authority need not provide facilities for it if they so please. The teacher is under no obligation to teach; the child is under no obligation to attend. But as regards the facilities to be granted to denominational trustees, in respect of the use of their premises for educational purposes, these facilities may be made a compulsory part of the bargain as between the two parties.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): That is not Section 4.

MR. ASQUITH: I am speaking of Clause 3. I say the trustees can stipulate, if they please, as one of the conditions upon which the school is to be transferred to the local authority, that these facilities shall be granted, and if the local authority does not agree, then the trustees need not transfer the school.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, they can stipulate.

MR. ASQUITH: I say the Bill contemplates that the normal case will be one in which an arrangement will be made on that footing between the trustees and the local authority. But suppose a case—which I hope will not occur—in which the trustees, however reasonable the terms offered, refuse to come into any bargain at all, and the local authority, therefore, would be faced with the alternative of having to provide, at the expense of the rates, another school for the parish. There is a school already there, which may have been built, to a considerable degree, by the aid of contributions from Government funds, which is held under an educational trust, and which has been maintained for the last four years exclusively out of the public rates and taxes. Would it be a reasonable thing to say that, in those circumstances, if the trustees choose to take up a *non possumus* attitude, the local authority is to go to the expense of providing an entirely new school? I do not think it would. Under the machinery of the Bill it will be open to the Commissioners, only provided they come to the conclusion that the educational trusts cannot be more adequately or so well performed in any other way than by transfer and user of the school for this purpose to the local authority, to make a scheme. I do not hesitate to say that no such scheme would be made by any reasonable body of men which did not provide proper and adequate terms both as regards rent and facilities for the denomination. How is that to be done? It is to be done by the Commission. We have heard a great deal of hard language about this Commission. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover spoke with indignation of the three Commissioners as a triumvirate. The right hon. Gentleman is steeped in classical lore, and he knows very well that the term triumvirate is associated in the minds of students of Roman history with a more or less unscrupulous partnership who carried on the work of spoliation and sometimes of sacrilege. That is what the term triumvirate is intended to suggest. Some of the right hon. Gentleman's clerical associates outside the House have gone one better, and have declared that this Commission will combine all the worst features of the Star Chamber and the Inquisition. Now, Sir, why do we suggest the appointment of this Commission? There is no sinister motive behind it. It is because we want to provide a tribunal which shall at the same time be cheap, prompt, accessible, and convenient for all parties concerned. And how is it to be constituted, and what are its powers and duties to be?

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Like the Parnell Commission.

MR. ASQUITH: So far, I agree with the hon. and learned Member that its members will be named in the Act of Parliament, they will not be anonymous. Therefore their nomination will be subject to approval by both Houses of the Legislature. In the second place, they are required to give their decisions not according to some rule of thumb; they are required to give their decision in accordance with the rules of equity which prevail in the Court of Chancery in the administration of charitable trusts. And as the Chancellor of the Duchy has pointed out, from whom do the objections to this Commission come? They come from a party which only last year appointed in Scotland, in regard to an ecclesiastical matter which, I assure the House, stirred the conscience and feelings of the people of Scotland quite as much as this question can affect the people of England, a Commission to adjudicate upon a number of most delicate proprietary and other questions as between the United Free Church and the Free

Church. I believe that was a triumvirate. [An HON. MEMBER: Five.] Well, in all other respects, except that it consisted of five persons, that Commission had powers quite as large, a discretion quite as unlimited, and restraints less clearly expressed in the statute, than is the case with this Commission. If you accept the principle of public control as I have defined it, it would be impossible to show a more scrupulous regard for equity, the rights of property, and for continued user of the buildings for all the special purposes of the trust, than are shown in the provision of this Bill.

I have said that the second principle which, in obedience to the mandate of the country, we were bound to introduce was the abolition of tests. I am relieved from much argument on that by another and still more remarkable admission which was made by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham last night. I think it would not be difficult to show that tests in any department of the public service are noxious and useless. In the case of honest men tests are unnecessary and by dishonest men they are evaded. I need not labour the point, because we heard last night the right hon. Gentleman say as to the principle that no religious test should be exacted from the teaching profession, "I think we all agree." The right hon. Gentleman used the first person plural more than once, and apparently not always in the same sense. At one moment "we" stood for the whole Unionist Party—I do not think for much more than one moment; at another moment "we" represented the seven stalwarts who came from Birmingham; and at another moment "we" stood for that indefinite and immeasurable quantity, the number of persons who happen for the time being to agree with the right hon. Gentleman. Let us who sit in these benches rejoice. This is almost a red-letter day in our history. For once we are embraced in that number. The Bill enacts that for the future no teacher shall be required to subscribe to any formulary, to attend the services of any particular religious communion, or even to give religious instruction if he is not minded so to do.

But now I approach the point where controversy becomes more acute. The teacher is not required to give any religious instruction, but he is empowered to give what has been called undenominational teaching—teaching, that is to say, that is recognised in the sense of not being prohibited by the Cowper-Temple Clause of the Act of 1870. I shall be asked—and I want to try and give a fair answer to the question—what is the justification for allowing your teacher to give this so-called undenominational form of religious teaching? I will admit that even the simplest form of religious teaching cannot accurately be called undogmatic. In a sense that is true. Indeed I go further. I will not qualify my proposition. It is true that the most elementary propositions as to the relations of man to a Higher Power and to an unseen world involve a dogmatic element. As a mere matter of logic you may urge, I agree, without any extravagance of paradox, perhaps without paradox at all, that such propositions, for instance, as those which assume the fatherhood of God or the existence of a future state are as much dogmatic as the doctrine of the Eucharist or the Immaculate Conception. But, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham very properly pointed out yesterday, the Cowper-Temple Clause does not profess to proscribe or exclude from our elementary schools dogmatic teaching. There is no such provision in the Act of 1870, because the framers, who knew what these things meant, were, we may assume, perfectly aware that to exclude dogmatic teaching in the widest sense of the term would be to exclude religion altogether. What it does is something quite different; it prevents the rate-aided teaching of formularies and creeds which are distinctive of some particular religious denomination. The two things are absolutely different one from the other. You may say that is very illogical, and in a sense I agree that it is. I never professed, and I do not believe any of my right hon. or hon. friends have ever professed to reduce the Cowper-Temple Clause to terms of strict logic. But we are living and moving in this matter not in a world of abstractions, but in a world of human beings, and, in particular, in a world of Englishmen and Englishwomen, and, above all, of English children; and the Cowper-Temple Clause, although it is illogical, is a thoroughly characteristic specimen of a workable English compromise. And when I use the term "workable" I point to the experience of a generation. And what has that experience shown? Two very remarkable facts. In the first place, that the local authorities of this country, representative of and responsible to the ratepayers and the parents of the children, although under no obligation to prescribe the use of any form of religious teaching in their schools, have, with relatively few and insignificant exceptions, adopted this form of teaching. Another fact equally remarkable, and pointing exactly in the same direction, is that the parents of the children have not withdrawn their children to any sensible extent from this kind of instruction, not even in places where there was an alternative school to which, if they pleased, they could send their children. These two facts are pretty good evidence in support of my proposition that the Cowper-Temple Clause has proved a very workable arrangement. What is the inference? My inference is this—that this system of simple Bible teaching does not as a rule offend the conscience of the average Anglican parent. Further, it is well fitted to the intelligence of the smallest child; and lastly, and perhaps most important, considering the smoothness and ease with which the system has been worked, it is capable—as every one, from the Archbishop of Canterbury downwards, has admitted—of being supplemented, and, if you please, enriched at home, in the Sunday School, and in the Church, by the addition of those more complex and more controverted matters which make up, if I may so describe it, the distinctive liveries of the various religious denominations.

If that is so, we come face to face with a new metaphysical figment—namely, the supposed inalienable right of the English parent to have his child taught at the cost of the State the particular creed which he himself professes. Where does this right come from? It is a new addition to the family of supposed natural rights. What is its parentage, and, above all, what is the date of its birth? It was not known to the framers of the Act of 1870. Why? Because they provided that if you wanted this privilege of denominational teaching for your child you could not have it at the expense of the rates, but you must go to a school supported by the voluntary subscriptions of the denomination whose creed was there taught. So that the right was clearly unknown in 1870. But this inalienable right found no recognition from the framers of the Act of 1902. What about the 8,000 parishes in which the choice of the Nonconformist parent lay, and at this moment still lies, between the Anglican teaching and no religious instruction at all? Where is this inalienable right of the parent to have his child brought up in the creed that he himself holds? It is a pure fiction; it has no home and no pedigree, either in the book of nature or in the statute law of the realm.

What is the alternative? There is only one alternative to permitting the local authority to continue this undenominational teaching. I say it deliberately, although the right hon. Member for West Birmingham seemed to think that there were two alternatives. I say there is only one, because I brush aside absolutely as being unworthy of consideration the universal and unlimited right of entry by the sects into the schools. I venture to ask the House, to ask those who are most honestly keen for denominational teaching in our schools, what could be more fantastic in conception, what could be more unworkable in practice, and, I may add for myself, what could be more repugnant to the best interests of religion, than that in the public elementary schools you should erect a set of sectarian pens, and that you should take these poor children, and having first put them through the process of interrogation, brand each of them with a letter which indicates its father's denomination, and then herd them off—["Oh, oh!" and "No, no!"]—each little group to its own separate compartment, to be taught—what? Surely not to be taught the Gospel lesson of one fold and one shepherd, but rather to encourage them from their earliest years to attach a supreme and capital importance, not to the things as to which all Christians are agreed and believe, but to he things about which Christians are at war. There is one real alternative which the hon. Member for Leicester in his admirable speech mentioned—namely, to confine the function of the State to secular teaching and to leave the provision of religious training for your children to be done outside the school. I am not sure that we have yet got to a clear definition of what secularism means. Take the position of the Bible. The Bible, I imagine, under a secular system might be still admitted to the school as a literary model, possibly—although I am not sure as to this—as an historical manual. But here the hon. Member is assigning a totally different place to the Bible from what it has held, and still holds, and what according to the wishes of the majority of the people it ought to continue to hold, in our schools. I will not argue the merits or demerits of the secularist solution. I say two things of it. It is not illogical, as I admitted a few moments ago, Cowper-Templeism may be said to be. I think, further, that it is not impracticable in the sense in which an unlimited universal right of entry would be. But it has one fatal drawback from the point of view of practical politics. The experience of a generation has shown that it is not suited to the genius and that it is contrary to the wishes and the predominant opinions of the vast majority of English parents.

I will add another word as to the speech of the hon. Member for Waterford about Clause 4. I admit that Clause 4 extending the facilities is an exception to the general scheme, grafted on the framework of this Bill. It leaves the matter to the discretion of the local authority. In other respects undoubtedly it constitutes an exception to the general scheme of the Bill. But to what case does it apply? It has two safeguards. In the first place, it can only be put into operation at the instance of an overwhelming majority of the parents in a particular school; and, in the next place, it can only be applied where there is an alternative school to which children whose parents do not desire to see them exposed to this ecclesiastical or sectarian atmosphere can be sent, instead of sending them to the sectarian school. It is said that this clause was put in with a special view to meet the case of the Roman Catholics. Who denies it? I do not hesitate for a moment to face the fact. But where similar conditions prevail with regard to any other religious denomination the same treatment will apply, and it gives the same advantage to them. I admit to the full what has been said about the peculiar position of Roman Catholics in this country with regard to education. I shall never be inclined to undervalue in any degree the enormous services which the clergy and the laity of the Church of England have rendered to education in days gone by, in the building of schools and in carrying on pioneer work in every direction. Yet no one will dispute the truth of what I say when I state that there is no denomination which, in proportion to its means and opportunities, has done so much for the education of its poor children as the Roman Catholic. And the condition of the Roman Catholic population is such that difficulties have arisen and will continue to arise in the country parishes of England, unless legislation of this kind is carried out. They have no existence in other communities, but in almost every case the thing must be worked out in detail, and we shall be glad to listen to the particular arguments used in reference to each case. But speaking broadly and generally of the Roman Catholic school in a district, there is an alternative school to which children may be sent It is the same in the case of the Jew I defy any one to produce an Education Bill which will be a perfect specimen of logical symmetry, and I may add that if you produced it it would be totally unadapted to meet the real wants of English education. It is only by elasticity, by adaptation, by recognising the special exigencies of particular places and particular causes that you can bring your legislation into harmony with the real requirements of the people. I hold, therefore, that the insertion of Clause 4, if we are to do justice to the real necessities of the case, was absolutely forced upon us. My colleagues and I are perfectly ready in Committee in all matters of detail to listen to reasonable suggestions, and, I hope, to come to harmonious adjustments. But with regard to the main provisions and the fundamental principles which I have endeavoured to explain to the House, dictated, as we believe them to be, by justice, and approved as they were by the vast majority of the electorate, to these main provisions we shall resolutely adhere.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: No one who has listened to the speeches made to-day and on preceding days on this measure, so important for the future educational and spiritual life of this country, can question that the debate has been worthy of an illustrious and reverent assembly. On many occasions I have been reminded of the debates of twenty years ago on the Home Rule Bill of 1886, and I think no one in any quarter of the House, or any part of the country outside, can deny that from all sides the attention has been given to this matter which its importance deserves. At the same time it must be remembered that we are laymen, and that from this House are excluded every cleric, both of the Church of England and of the Catholic Church, and I believe all ministers in active communion with any sect. We must remember that we are dealing with the minds of children, plastic and receptive, who are to be the future fathers and mothers and directors of this great Empire, and when we, with our mundane views, our mundane prepossessions, and our temporal interests address ourselves to this matter, I venture to think we are not able to bring those considerations to all parts of the question which do go to the root of this great educational matter. At this stage I must heartily protest against the view that whether in this matter of education, or in any other concern with which we have to deal, clericalism is the enemy. I protest against it. I say it is not true. It was not true when it was first spoken, and it is certainly not true in this matter of education. I do not rise, however, for any purpose of wrangling or contention with Members on the Front Bench opposite. I rise rather for the purpose of saying that I have listened with some attention to the demand which has been made and the proposition put forward by responsible Gentlemen on the Irish and Catholic side of the question, and have failed to notice any response whatsoever thereto. I know very well that Parliamentary government cannot be carried on merely across the floor of the House of Commons. I know very well that there are Gentlemen upon this side of the House to whom Party is more than religion, and I know very well the reticence that is requisite and necessary in dealing with a great and complex question, but in the main I must say that my sympathies have been aroused by the speeches of the Tory Party in this matter, and I think it does them credit that they have not been ashamed to get up in this mundane and sometimes cynical assembly to protest with vehemence and passion in favour of principles similar to those which we as Catholics profess. I am old enough as a Parliamentarian to make allowance for this reserve upon the Government Benches, and also I know well the strong pressure which is put upon them from their own side of the House, largely from men of small acquaintance with Parliamentary traditions, some of them new to the House, some outside the House, who little know what goes to the making of a contentious British Act of Parliament. It is said that the late election gave birth to a mandate. From what the Chancellor of the Exchequer suggests it gave birth to twins or triplets. I must admit at the outset that the Nonconformists of England have a distinct grievance. I believe that their spiritual concerns have been prejudicially affected, and their conscience far strained, if not outraged, by the existing state of affairs. But the question is this: Does this Bill merely remedy that, or does it take occasion to go far beyond the necessities of the case? We all know the consecrated phrase, "Go and teach all nations." I think the preamble of this Bill might be, as far as this doctrine is concerned, "Go and teach all nations, with the consent of the county council." Having given careful consideration to this Bill I can see no propriety in a large portion of its provisions. I can see no occasion for them, in so far as relief to the Nonconformist Party is concerned, and I should construe it as a new Act of Conformity. I never read the Act of Conformity passed in the time of Charles II. until this Bill was introduced. I was astonished to find, ignorant as I am, that the Book of Common Prayer was only the schedule of an Act of Parliament. I went into the House of Lords. I looked, so curious was I, at the original of the measure, and there I found actually interlineations and Amendments in the handwriting, I suppose, of the Clerk at the Table and the other persons who assisted at religion in the making. And when I saw that the Ordering of Deacons was prescribed by statute, together with such matters as the Communion and other sacred subjects of that kind, I understood the meaning of Nonconformity, and I realised how strong must be the feeling of those Gentlemen opposite, who starting with the proposition which the Church of England originally announced as against the Catholic, that the Bible was to be the sole book and ground of faith, rejected the proposition that religion might be taught or enforced by Act of Parliament. But what is this Bill? It is the new Act of Conformity. It is the Nonconformist Act of Conformity. Who was Cowper-Temple? One of the new British Apostles? I can well understand when we get into Committee on this Bill, if it retains its present form, Church of England gentlemen playing the same game as against the Nonconformists, through the medium of a schedule, as was played in the time of Charles against the Catholics. For instance, happy Hampshire has been referred to by the President of the Board of Trade, who announced that the Hampshire formula was one agreed to by the Catholics, Protestants, Nonconformists, and atheists of Hampshire. Supposing when we come to this question of special instruction the Conservative Party say, "Let us do what our forefathers did, and put into the schedule of this Bill this simple Bible teaching which Nonconformists are willing to accept, and not leave it to the tender mercy of, say, the Hampshire County Council. For even the most reverent minded or irreverent minded must desire that on this great matter of public instruction you should not have men able to say, 'I belong to the Yorkshirists,' or 'In religion I have Lancashire leanings.' All sects of Protestants accept the Bible, and as it is from this House that the Bible is authorised to be taught in Churches, we should put into this Bill the simple Bible teaching dear to the hearts of all of us." What would be your answer to that? Will you say, "Oh, let us leave it to the London County Council," so that the body which is elected to look after drainage will have in the future the right to deal with doxology. I do want, therefore, gentlemen of the Nonconformist faith who take so strong a view with regard to the Catholic position to understand the tremendous differences and difficulties which lie along the road in dealing with this great and important subject. The Irish Secretary said yesterday that once you have public control you must not have tests. I looked up what was the root of that proposition, and I find that it is absolutely incorrect, because in a number of cardinal matters where you have public control this House has insisted upon sectarian teaching. The Catholic convict, the Catholic pauper, the Catholic soldier, and even the Catholic corpse is looked after with extraordinary punctillo by the great Parliament of England. But before I come to that, I wish to disclaim from my heart the opinion that the English people, so far as I have met them in this House, are bigoted against my own religion. I wish to add this in addition. A story has gone with extraordinary effect throughout the length and breadth of Ireland. It was the case of a poor soldier wounded in the South African War and crying for a priest to hear his last confession and give him absolution. No priest was within 700 miles of him; but the authorities sent a special train 700 miles to bring a Catholic priest to hear his dying confession. How could we Catholics, knowing what is the modern feeling of Englishmen with regard to our creed, approach this question from any point of view of suggesting that you desire to deal unfairly with us? When you had these difficulties to deal with in former days how easily, specifically and circumstantially, you met us. Take the case of the Poor Law. You have full control over the Poor Law, yet Catholic children must be reared as Catholics. If they are brought into the workhouse, they must be put under a specific head of the denomination; they must be taught by a Catholic teacher; they must be taught the Catholic religion; they must go to Mass on Sunday; and the guardians, either inside or outside the workhouse, must see that these children receive Catholic instruction. Where is the difficulty there, and yet you have popular control. Now I come to the industrial schools under the control of local bodies. Where a child is committed by the magistrate to these schools, it is provided by law that the magistrate must send a Catholic child to a Catholic industrial school. If the father or mother are so ignorant or so criminal that their children are driven to the streets, the country takes them before a magistrate and commands that magistrate to send them to get a good Catholic education at the expense of the local authorities. So I must be either a pauper or a foundling in order that the rites of my religion may be conserved. Then how do you provide for the pauper carcass? One would think that when we die you would throw our bodies into a common fosse. That is how they deal with a dead Catholic in some places. But it is illegal under one of the provisions of the Public Health Act to bury a non-Catholic in a Catholic plot. One might say, "What harm would it do to bury John Jones and Paddy O'Rafferty side by side?" But such is the spirit of your legislation that without any practical demand from united Irish sentiment, and from mere equity, which is after all the one thing that this House most prides itself upon, you made that tender provision for these poor people to lie in the dust only with members of their own creed. It is said it would outrage Protestant sentiment to provide money for non-Protestant teaching. But you provide money for Mohammedan teaching in Khartoum; and you actually provide money for the Jesuits in Ireland, though perhaps you do not know it. It is illegal to have anybody but Catholic priests to officiate in Catholic plots; it is illegal for any but a Catholic burial service conducted by a Catholic to be carried on therein. Is not this question you have to deal with in connection with one small denomination a measurable and handable question? I know and intensely feel the meaning of this great conflict between the various Protestant communities. But, what have we done to deserve being drawn into the mill? There was an unfortunate battle between the Protestants and Catholics in the days of Henry VIII. We were beat, and for three centuries the Papists were like a toad under the harrow. They have gradually emerged, and, relying on the faith of British tradition and of British statutes, they have under the shadow of the Protestant church, Methodist chapel, or Quaker place of worship, erected their humble and sometimes their squalid churches and schools. Catholics never dreamt that they would be involved in the controversy between the Protestant sects. Up to 1870 Catholics never asked for a subsidy; they never dreamt of it. They erected their schools and kept them unaided and without troubling you in any way. But after the German War it was decided that there must be universal compulsory education, and it was at once found necessary to provide school rates. That was in the economic days of Mr. Gladstone, who believed in compelling people to pay rates to make this provision. At once the Catholics found themselves rated to provide education for Nonconformists, the Church of England being already sufficiently provided for. That is what has given rise to this entire controversy. Consequently in 8,000 parishes you want this inexorable Bill as a straight-jacket to torture us. Why; it is absurd. "Oh," it is said, "you must have logic." This phrase about logic is like a football. We are assured that the British constitution is not logical and that human life cannot be conducted on principles of logic. That is when it suits you to say so. When some proposition is put forward to mitigate a hardship you yourself suffer, you say, "Oh, we must be logical." This Bill, which deals with 20,000 schools, proposes to affect 1,000 Catholic schools in which not one Nonconformist or one Churchman takes the smallest interest whatever. The life of England would not be affected, so far as English national life is concerned, if these 1,000 Catholic schools had never been established, or if they were swept from the face of the earth. Why, then, interfere with them? The Spanish Armada is not on the Channel. There is an *entente cordiale* with the French. The Pope is in the Vatican; the Italian Government have him pretty well in safe custody. And, therefore, in this great conflict between Anglicans and Nonconformists, why, when you have made us pay for our own schools for three or four centuries, do you now propose a new Act to put a prescription upon these unhappy Catholic schools? It would be, of course, easy for us to speak in matters of this kind in language of emotion. I desire, if I can, to avoid anything of that kind, and, above all, I wish to avoid making protestation of religious opinion. But I will say this, I would rather have my children learn to say "Our Father" than to learn the use of the globes. I would rather they understood their religion in the provision for the eternity which is to come than that they should become rich and prosperous, and educated in the things of this world. I would give very little for your education. I cannot spell myself. I cannot parse an English sentence. I cannot do the rule of three. I am supposed to know a little law, but I think that is a mistake. But if there is one thing which I and mine have got a grip of, it is the belief in the Infinite Christ to come; and the belief that our children, whatever be their distresses, whatever be their misfortunes, whatever be their poverty in this world, if they have listened to the teaching of the Church, will reap a rich reward in putting into practice the lessons of Christianity which they receive in the Catholic schools.

MR. PAUL (Northampton): I am too old and too hardened an Erastian to be too much shocked at the hon. Gentleman's description of the Parliamentary origin of the Church to which I belong. I know that the religion of Protestant is fair game for the racy humour of my hon. and learned friend and those who belong to the Church of which he is a member. I have listened to the speeches of the hon. Member and to those of the hon. Members for Waterford and the City of Cork, and I could not help thinking that while theoretically we were hopelessly asunder, practically the difference between us was very small indeed. There is no human method of bridging the gulf between one who, like myself, believes in the principle of private judgment in matters of faith and those who believe, like hon. Members from Ireland, that it is a matter of authority. Which of us is on the right side of the abyss God only knows, but I cannot think that the question of how to adjust the conditions of these denominational schools can be beyond the capacity of this House. I rise in the first place to respond to a peculiar challenge which came yesterday from a very remarkable source. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, speaking for the first, and I hope not for the last time, as the champion and spokesman of the Church of England, attacked me and some of my hon. friends here under the impression that we were triumphant Nonconformists, dancing upon the prostrate body of a communion to which we did not belong. I do not know how long the right hon. Gentleman has been a member of the Church of England, but I have been a member of it ever since I was born, or at all events since my baptism, which I cannot remember, and I take the liberty of denying that the Church of England is opposed to this Bill. I have no more right to speak for the Church of England than the right hon. Gentleman has to speak for the Unionist Party when he denounces tests, but I would remind him that the Church of England does not consist exclusively of venerable and vituperative ecclesiastics. The Church of England consists for the main part of laymen and nine-tenths, and I believe I may say nineteen-twentieths, of the members of the Church of England are entirely satisfied with the religious education given in the provided schools of the country. They do not regard it merely as the foundation upon which the superstructure may be built; they think it is sufficient and complete in itself. What is undenominationalism? I should answer that question in one word—Christianity; and if I were asked to give a specimen of undenominational religion I would give with all reverence the Sermon on the Mount. There is no dogma there; there is no difficulty in understanding it; the difficulty is to live up to it. And where, I should like to know, do these dogmatic gentlemen send their own sons. The hon. Member for the Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen, in the less gloomy of his vaticinations, predicted that one result of this Bill might be the substitution of private for public schools, but the fact is that gentlemen opposite send their sons to public schools. There is only one of those institutions that I know anything about, but I have no reason to suppose that in any respect it is not typical of others, and the only dogmatic teaching I ever learnt there was that the New Testament was written in very bad

Greek. But I learned a great many much more valuable things, and I sent my son there, because I thought he would be made a Christian and a scholar, and not a sacerdotalist or a theologian. I noticed the other night that when the names of Canon Henson and the Bishop of Hereford were mentioned in debate there were sounds of dissent. But are not they and many others who support this Bill to be reckoned as Churchmen? If right hon. and hon. Gentlemen wish to destroy the Church of England, which they cannot do, there is no better step they can take than to identify it with a political party. I do not think that the Liberal Party have any monopoly of, and perhaps they have not a majority in the Church of England. Certainly they have no monopoly in the Church, but neither have right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite. The Church of England is a national institution, and all political opinions are quite well represented within its boundaries. I have been told in this House and out of it that this Bill has taken the country by surprise, but I think I could give very simply and shortly a conclusive piece of evidence to show that that is not the case. I have had occasion to present several petitions against this Bill from my constituency—not many and not very numerously signed, but they are all drawn in the same language. I do not quite know what it is called, but it is not the English of scholars; it is not the English of the working man; it is not the language of Christian, Pagan, or of man. It is a jargon only used by the ecclesiastical petition-monger. But the fact is that these petitions were drawn out before this Bill was introduced and the language is not altered by a sentence, or word, or even a comma, in the petitions which followed after its introduction, so that I do not think that the gentlemen who got up these petitions could be surprised at the nature of the Bill. No intelligent man or woman who took part in the last election or watched its progress could be at all astonished at the main features of this measure. I know that what I am now going to say is very unpopular, and equally unpopular on both sides of the House. I do not believe in the doctrine of the mandate. I regard it as part of the extreme Continental Jacobinism which cannot be fitted in any way into the British Constitution. If it were carried to its logical extreme we might as well shut up the House of Commons, and have a museum of automatic voting machines run by a company promoted, not on Party lines, by the hon. Member for South Hackney and the hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet. In this Protestant country nine-tenths of the people who have any religion at all believe in private judgment, in the open Bible, and in the principles of the Reformation. From whom does the opposition to this Bill come, and by whom is it promoted? The opposition comes from a small knot of High Church clergymen and ecclesiastical laymen who would, if they could, Romanise the Church of England and do all in their power to assimilate it to the great Church which despises them. No doubt there will be criticism on parts of the Bill, and no perfect Bill was ever introduced into this House, but there will be no general, certainly no fanatical, opposition to the main principles of the measure. I heard the other night my hon. friend the Member for Leicester plead very earnestly for the principles of secular education, but I believe that the exclusion of the religion of the Bible from the elementary schools of this country would be the most inexpressible calamity which could befall the nation. I support this Bill because I believe it does equal justice to all classes and creeds, because I believe it is founded on the principle of Erasmus that the sum of religion is peace and gives statutory authority to the principle that religion should have a vital and prominent place in the system of elementary education in this Christian country.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I rise, like the hon. Member who has just sat down, as a member of the Church of England, and after some of the language which he has used and which has been used by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House I feel that I ought to apologise for a member of the Church of England taking part in this debate. The hon. and learned Member for North Louth in the extremely interesting and brilliant speech which he recently addressed to the House referred to the great toleration which the Government of this country had extended to members of the Roman Catholic persuasion, and I was very glad to hear him refer to that, as it forms a matter which Englishmen contemplate with the greatest pride. But if that great and good tradition is infringed it will be the result of special privileges being accorded to the Roman Catholic religion which are not accorded to the Church of England. I do not desire to keep the attention of the House any longer than I can help, and it therefore necessarily follows that I must omit a great number of criticisms upon this Bill which I should like to make. I do not propose to touch upon the question of public control or the question of tests to teachers to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has referred. Only one observation will I make upon that matter. I cannot help thinking that right hon. Gentlemen opposite very gravely misunderstood the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The right hon. Gentleman does not belong to the same Church as I do, and I freely admit that it was with some surprise and a great deal of pleasure that I found myself in almost entire agreement with all that fell from his lips, and particularly with regard to this matter of tests for teachers. The only provision in this Bill which touches on that is Clause 7, Sub-section 2, which provides that—

> "A teacher employed in an elementary school shall not be required as part of his duties as teacher to give any religious instruction."

That is not the question of test at all. That is something that happens to him after his appointment—

> "And shall not be required as a condition of his appointment"—

and this is the test—

> "to subscribe to any religious creed or to attend or abstain from attending any Sunday school or place of worship."

That may be a proper principle or not, I am not going to discuss it, but it has nothing to do with the contention put forward by members of the Church of England or of the Church of Rome that it is an outrage to permit a teacher, who does not believe in the religion he is appointed to teach, to teach that religion. If it were to be a test that he should attend certain services, then I think we should all of us be equally opposed to it. There is one aspect of this Bill to which I do think I ought to call attention, and that is what I may call the uncertainty of the policy which underlies it. Take the clause which the right hon. Gentleman referred to this afternoon, the clause which provides for ordinary facilities. One would think, looking at that casually, that there was some security that ordinary facilities will be granted to the non-provided schools which are transferred. There is no security whatever. It is quite true that if the trustees and the local authorities come to an agreement to that effect then such facilities will be given. But the local authority is not bound to come to such an agreement or to take the school over at all. And if no agreement is come to the local authority can go to the Commission who may or may not grant such facilities. That is characteristic of the whole Bill. There is a suggestion thrown out that the local authorities are going to be tolerant and grant the facilities which denominationalists demand, but when you come to examine the Bill closely you will find time after time that that promise is not carried out very fully.

I pass over a large number of instances which I could give the House and come to the main grievance which the members of the Church of England have against this Bill. Take the case of Bible teaching. Almost every Member of that side of the House has said, "We are going to give you Bible teaching in your schools, why are you not satisfied with that?"

Sir, there is not any security that there is to be any Bible teaching. We had a description of the Cowper-Temple clause from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He described it as a thoroughly English working compromise. But what the Cowper-Temple clause does is not to provide that any kind of religious teaching is to be given, but that one kind is to be given in the schools. Then we are told it may be one of the facilities, and that we must look at the history of the last thirty-five years. That is the favourite reply made. I have endeavoured since this debate began to look into the history of the last thirty-five years, and there is, so far as I can see at present, only one official document to assist us, and that is the Return given in 1895 of the religious instruction given in the board schools. I heard with great surprise from the Chancellor of the Duchy that in only seven boards religious instruction had not been given. I looked up that point. I know how difficult it is to be always accurate in giving these statistics. We heard a great deal about the want of accuracy in dealing with figures in the fiscal debate, but I do not think there was ever so great a want of accuracy as this. I found that instead of seven there were fifty-seven boards in Wales where no religious instruction was given, and that in no less than 316 boards the Bible was read without comment. Now to read the Bible without comment is practically equivalent to giving no religious instruction at all. In the overwhelming majority of cases no examination or test of the religious instruction given in these schools took place. It is not impossible to say that school board religion is a wonderful thing, and there are certain people whose word is entitled to respect who have said so. But so far as the Return and the statement are concerned there is no justification whatever for the statement. There is even a more serious thing than that to consider, and that is the nature of this Bible teaching; the nature of the fundamental Christianity of which we have heard so much. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland is the only person, with the exception of the hon. Member for Northampton, who has ventured to give a definition of what he considers to be fundamental Christianity. In the course of the speech he made yesterday, he said—

> "The only form of Christian teaching that can properly be given to a child is in those few fundamental truths in regard to which Christians agree. These fundamental truths are the goodness and kindness of the Creator, the duty to love Him and keep His commandments and the sacred precepts of the New Testament, especially those precepts delivered by Christ Himself; precepts delivered in expressive language, so simple and beautiful, that it touches the imagination and emotion of a child, and goes home to his heart."

[Cheers.] I hear that cheer, and I would say nothing to show the slightest disrespect for that religion. The only thing I say about it is that the essential doctrine of Christianity is conspicuous by its absence. And it is the same in a manner with the definition of the hon. Member for Northampton. He says, "Teach the Sermon on the Mount." I have no objection at all. The Sermon on the Mount is part of Christianity, but it is not the whole of Christianity. The morality of the Sermon on the Mount would be, I believe, accepted by almost every person in this country as part of their religious belief, but it is grotesque to tell me it is fundamental Christianity. I say I regard such teaching as that as absolutely worthless from the point of view of Christianity. Let me be quite clearly understood. I speak now and I know that I speak with the full assent of a large proportion of the members of the Church of England. Be that as it may, I do not wish to be unduly dogmatic. But if we are to have Christianity at all we must have Christianity, and we cannot substitute for it the teaching of Christian morals and the historic teaching of the Bible. So much for the history of the last thirty-five years. Then we are told to look at the admirable syllabus constructed by the Hampshire County Council. I proposed to say something about that subject, but what I intended to say is quite unnecessary after what has been said by the hon. and learned Member for North Louth. I would, however, like to say something with regard to what the President of the Board of Trade was so indignant about, namely, the statement that the teaching of the Hampshire syllabus was the teaching of Nonconformity. I venture to say it was the teaching of Nonconformity. After all, what is Nonconformity? I have had an opportunity of looking at a document which was treated with scant courtesy by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade; a document that was agreed to by all the leading churches of Nonconformity. I can tell the House exactly what it is called, "A declaration of the United Churches' convictions," and it is signed by the heads of all the Free Churches. Now what is that document? If I might venture to summarise it, I should describe it as a declaration of Church of England doctrine without the distinctive feature of Church of England doctrine. It is not so much that that document contains much that the Church of England actually disapproves of as that it omits much that the Church of England believes and insists on. What is the distinction between the Church of England Catechism and the Free Church Catechism, speaking generally? We have been told by the President of the Board of Trade that this Catechism is the very foundation of the undenominational teaching in the Liverpool board schools. Your Cowper-Temple clause says you are to have no formulary or creed distinctive of any particular denomination. Does this contain any formulary? [Cries of "No."] I agree. Therefore this can be taught in your provided schools, the Church of England Catechism cannot. I was charged by the President of the Board of Trade with some degree of annoyance because I ventured to suggest that substantially the leading sects of Nonconformists were agreed upon that head. I think I have satisfied the House that that was a perfectly just observation to make, and the fact remains that this Bill, which we are told is not to be in the interests of Nonconformity, which does not give any special privileges to Nonconformity, has been welcomed with effusive gratitude by every Nonconformist in the country. [Cries of "No."] I know they do not like Clause 4, but I am talking of those provisions which are not designed to assist other creeds than their own. Let me read what the hon. Member for the Louth Division of Lincolnshire said. He said—

> "In its essential feature it carries out the education scheme for which Wesleyan Methodists have been contending for fifteen years. The main provisions in the Bill may almost have been taken from the minutes of the Wesleyan Conference."

Does the right hon. Gentleman still assert that this Bill does not give privileges to Nonconformity? But as to their syllabuses, whether they are admirable or not, the essential fact remains that they are not part of this Bill. There is nothing to compel any local authority whatever to teach the doctrines contained in those syllabuses. May I ask why they are not put in the Bill? Why?—because you know quite well you would not have a chance of passing the Bill if you put in any one of them, and for the reason hon. Members opposite would not have the hardihood to get up then and say that this is not a Bill in favour of one particular sect. You are not going to do it yourself, but you are going to say to every county council in the country, "You may do it if you like." That is really what this Bill is. I confess that the form of legislation which says that the House of Commons is not to be trusted to settle the Christian teaching that is to be given in the provided schools of the country, but says that the county councils are to be trusted with it, is one which I admit is of a very surprising character indeed. The real truth is—it may seem a harsh saying—the Members of the Government do not care one way or the other on this question. [Cries of, "Oh."] I assert it is so. The President of the Board of Education in introducing this Bill said it was not an Education Bill at all, but a Bill to settle that ill-omened subject the religious difficulty. It is not the most important aspect of education—that was the attitude of his speech right through. The President of the Board of Trade defined the policy in the Bill—a phrase I hope that will not be readily forgotten—as being based on the principle that "clericalism is the enemy." In order that there might be no mistake as to what he meant he referred to the history of France, to show exactly the sense in which he was using the phrase. What has been the result in France? Is there simple Bible teaching in French schools? Everybody knows that in the State schools of France every vestige of religion has been excluded, even sacred images and pictures. ["Why?"] Because they say clericalism is the enemy. What about America? A book has recently been published by Mr. Shadwell on educational efficiency. He has examined this question there, and he says—

> "The religious difficulty has been disposed of, and that is true. There is no religious question in the public schools and no religion.

Dogmatic—that is denominational teaching—was given up to appease sectarian animosity, and Bible-reading substituted. That has been actually dropped by degrees, and the foundations of Western morality have, in effect, disappeared from the public schools. *Pari passu* attendance at Sunday school has dropped off. It is easy to dispose of the religious difficulty by disposing of religion. In like manner, the educational difficulty has been disposed of in the Andaman Islands."

That is apparently the ideal of the President of the Board of Trade, when he sums up the policy of the Government as "clericalism is the enemy." I do not want to pose in any way, but I do say that Members of the Church of England do care exceedingly about this question. They regard religion, not as a valuable adjunct to education, but as the foundation on which all education must rest. They say that by the legislation of 1870 and the legislation that has followed, the State has taken over the education of the children. It has made it free, and it has made it compulsory. If it has taken over the education of the children, it must provide the religious education as the foundation on which the secular education must rest. That is what we mean by the inalienable right of parents. We do not suggest that if the State left the question of education alone, they would be bound to give religious education to the children. But if they take it over, and take the place of the parents, as they have in this matter, then they are bound to give religious instruction, and the only religious instruction they can fairly give is that which the parents desire. That is the position which the Church of England, in spite of the sneers of the President of the Board of Trade, honestly takes up. The right hon. Gentleman ventured to suggest that this right of the parents was merely trotted out as a kind of stalking horse, in order to secure some privilege for the Church. That is an observation which ought never to have been made. And may I say this to right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have come back with enormous power, flushed with the victory of the polls? They think they are irresistible. Do not let them underestimate the forces against them on this question. The hon. Member for Northampton, with characteristic vigour of expression, suggested that the only people who were really against this Bill were the section of the Church of England which he described as of a romanising tendency. That is absolutely the reverse of the fact. I do not hold with that section myself. If I belong to any section it is that of the old High Church. Of that section I can say they are determined in their opposition to this Bill. I had an opportunity of attending a meeting of Evangelical clergy the other day, and to a man they were as vehement and as uncompromising in their attitude. The Ritualists, it is conceded, are opposed to the Bill. You have substantially the whole Church of England against you on this question. I do not mean to say you will not find Churchmen here and there who differ upon this matter, but, speaking as a practical politician, you have the whole of the Church of England against you, and let right hon. and hon. Gentlemen carefully consider the situation. The Church of England has not in this country had so much perhaps to put up with as the Church of Rome, but it too has suffered some amount of persecution. Wherever that persecution has been attempted it has failed, and the Church which did not yield to the dragooning of Cromwell's soldiers will not yield to the departmental persecution and the tyranny of this Bill.

*MR. WHITBREAD (Huntingdonshire, Huntingdon): I ask leave to take a very short part in this debate, not only as one who represents a constituency which for the first time for twenty years has returned to this House a Member to support a Liberal Government, but also as one who has for the past three years presided over a county Education Committee which has been loyally endeavouring to administer the Act of 1902 in the true interests of the children of that county. I say at once that although the Party to which I belong found in that Act many things to object to, yet the Act has proved itself during the past three years in many respects a great step in advance in the cause of education in our country districts. After the debate to which we have listened for the last few days, and in particular after the very remarkable speech delivered by the right hon.

Member for West Birmingham, I do not think it is necessary to do more than mention three propositions which I look upon as practically admitted or, at all events, to which all effective opposition has gone by the board. Those propositions are, first, that the Act of 1902 left behind it a grievance which was widespread and well founded; and that there is only one way in which to remedy that grievance, namely, by giving force to the principles of the Bill now before the House, that where public money is taken for an object, public control must necessarily follow, and that all posts in the teaching profession should be open to every person who is qualified, regardless of the particular denomination to which he may belong. We are told by hon. Gentlemen opposite that this is an act of confiscation. They declare that they will not give up their schools, and I understand from what I have read that the managers of denominational schools throughout the country are prepared, like the clerical party in France, to oppose to the last the action of the executive Government when they attempt to carry out this Bill. I hear that they are saving up the chimney soot of the last spring cleaning with which to greet the officials who come to take possession of their school buildings. I think the position with regard to the alleged confiscation of voluntary schools would be made much clearer if we kept in sight one simple fact, that a school and a school building are two distinct and independent things. A school is an institution which has a continuous life, independent of whether or not it is housed in any particular building. This House would still be the House of Commons if these buildings were consumed by fire, and the public elementary school will continue to be a school whether it is allowed to carry on its work within the walls of any particular building or not. As far as schools are concerned, voluntary schools have been given up long ago. From the first days of building grants, fee grants, and aid grants, right up to the Act of 1902, the whole course has been to shift the burden of the maintenance of the voluntary schools on to the shoulders of the public, and to take the corresponding burdens off the shoulders of the denominations to which the schools belonged. With regard to the school buildings, no one contends that they are not private property, and no House of Commons would ever dream of taking them over without an adequate and proper consideration. The consideration in this case is, I believe, more than adequate, and I find confirmation of that statement in the fact that hon. Members sitting on the Opposition side have more than once accused the Government of erring on the side of extravagance. Therefore, it hardly lies in the mouth of objectors to this Bill to raise the double objection that this is an Act of confiscation, while at the same time they allege that the consideration that is offered for the use of the schools is an extravagant use of the taxpayers' money. It is all very well for them to say that they are the aggrieved parties, and have the right to the choice of the weapons, but that does not entitle them to use both weapons at the same time.

After the speech of the noble Lord who has just sat down, I desire to touch very briefly upon the question of religious teaching in the schools. I have been told that Cowper-Templeism, or the simple Bible teaching given in the schools, is a colourless religion. It has been called a new religion. The right hon. Gentlemen the Member for West Birmingham upon a former occasion used that expression, but I gather that he has now withdrawn it. The right hon. Gentleman is not one who easily withdraws what he has said, and just in proportion as his withdrawals are unusual, so we are grateful. What is this new religion? One is almost tempted to wonder, if it were possible for the late Mr. Cowper-Temple to re-visit this House, what he would think of its being said that what he introduced was a new religion. Mr. Cowper-Temple was a stout Churchman, who passed many years of his life in this House, and afterwards went to another place. It might be said that he lived and died in orthodoxy. What is to-day the teaching that is derided as Cowper-Templeism, which itself was the result of a very small amendment, introduced at Mr. Cowper-Temple's instigation into the Act of 1870? I have here a copy of the instructions issued by the Education Committee, over which

I have the pleasure of presiding, and I will venture very briefly to quote some of them to the House, because I think an ounce of fact is worth a ton of abuse. The first instruction runs—

> "The Bible shall be read, and there shall be given such explanation and such instruction therefrom in the principles of the Christian religion and morality, as are suited to the capacity of the children."

Provision is made for offering prayer and using hymns at the proper time, and for that purpose we have to provide a small collection of hymns and prayers which I should have no hesitation in offering for the approval of any hon. Gentlemen opposite, so carefully have they been compiled. And then, in case we should be accused of being narrow or sectarian, we have enacted—

> "That any head teacher who wishes, instead of adopting our syllabus, may adopt the Scripture of the Oxford or Cambridge junior local examination syllabus, or that of the Ely Diocesan Council."

Hon. Members who have any acquaintance with the Ely Diocesan Council will be able to appreciate the length and breadth of that concession. For the infants and lower standards we have the Lord's Prayer, the 23rd Psalm, the Ten Commandments, the Gospel according to St. Mark, lessons from seven selected parables, the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John, the Acts of the Apostles, and so on. Is this a new religion? I would venture to make two statements with respect to it. First of all, this religious instruction, administered with ordinary average ability and loyalty by the teachers in our elementary schools, is in itself a sound and a good foundation for any doctrinal instruction that may follow. In the second place, it is in my humble opinion such religious instruction as you can profitably and conveniently instil into the minds of the average children between the ages of five and fourteen years. Whilst on the subject of the rights of parents, I will say that any parent who finds this syllabus insufficient, may be safely trusted to look after the further final religious instruction of his child. This simple Bible teaching has stood the test of a generation, and it has commended itself to persons high in authority in the Church of England, who in the early days viewed it with suspicion and dislike, but who have come now to speak of it with a warm tribute of praise. It is said that you have no guarantee what will be taught. What guarantee can you have as to how the education in our schools is administered, except our knowledge of the earnestness and loyalty of those who devote themselves to the profession of teaching in our schools? If it is a question of guarantee, what guarantee has the Church of England in regard to the teaching that goes on in her Sunday schools? How often has it been the experience of hon. Members that the teaching in the Church of England Sunday schools has been left as a kind of safety valve for the exuberant zeal of the younger members of the clergyman's family? I believe that the persons who enter the teaching profession and find a sphere of usefulness in our elementary schools are not Agnostics or indifferent to the value of Christian teaching. They are, I believe, if I may describe them by such a term, a very conventionally minded class of persons. Most of them are, as a matter of fact, members of the Church of England; all, or most of them, take up their profession from a real and earnest love of the children they have to teach. I believe that teaching such as I have ventured to indicate to the House may be left with great confidence to the teachers whom we find in the elementary schools. At any rate, what I believe to be most important in promoting Christian charity and harmony among the people in our agricultural districts and in towns is that we should have a system under which every little Anglican, every little Wesleyan, every little Evangelical, and every little Calvinist may sit on the same form and learn together their duty towards one another, and, as regards their higher duty, may learn something of the great lessons of order, reverence, and good conduct, which may be drawn from such teaching. I know that in a Bill containing forty clauses there must be room for amendment. I listened with great interest and instruction to the speech of the hon. Member for North Camberwell, and I found myself practically in agreement with him as to the necessity of various Amendments in the Bill. If I might particularise for a moment I would turn to the clause which authorises the delegation of powers. "Devolution" is a word much in vogue at the present time. There appears to be an almost Mesopotamian blessedness in the word "devolution," except in one place which we must not mention, and that is Ireland. I look with some alarm and misgiving upon the proposal to delegate powers from the education committees as they are at present constituted, to smaller and perhaps less capable and less responsible local bodies, but that may be made the subject of an Amendment, and I know that this is not the stage for dwelling on defects of that character. I shall vote with confidence and absolute conviction in favour of the Second Reading of the Bill, which I look upon as an earnest and genuine attempt, full of hope for the future, to improve the educational system of this country. I appeal to hon. Members opposite not to take up the uncompromising attitude of hostility to this Bill which is shown by some of their friends and supporters outside the House.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): The hon. Member for Northampton said in addressing the House that he had no right whatever to claim to speak for the Church of England, and almost in the same breath he proceeded to state what he asserted to be the views of nineteen-twentieths of the members of that Church. He stated that they were in favour of the principle of this Bill. He quoted in support of his contention a Churchman whom we all know to be opposed to us in politics—the Bishop of Hereford. He quoted him as a supporter of the Bill. The Bishop of Hereford in a letter which appeared in *The Times* of Monday last indicated certain Amendments which he considered were necessary in order to make the Bill acceptable to him. If the Government are willing to accept these Amendments, all I can say is that they will go far to remove the objections of Churchmen, and of those on this side of the House. The Amendments would also incidentally destroy the whole basis of the Bill. The President of the Board of Trade resented with much vehemence the imputation that the Bill is directed against the Church of England. But I would remind the right hon. Gentleman of what was said on August 30th last year by the Leader of the Welsh Party, of which, no doubt, the right hon. Gentleman is still a Member—

> "Wales possesses in this education fight the greatest opportunity she has ever had or is ever likely to have for securing once for all full civil and religious liberty. It has placed disestablishment once more within the range of practical politics, and actually within our grasp . . . . It is not the Education Question *per se* which appeals to me so much as the fact that this fight must lead up to disestablishment."

In view of that utterance I think we are justified as Churchmen in feeling some apprehension as to the ultimate effect of this Bill. Churchmen, rightly or wrongly, regard this measure as a religious reprisals Bill. They believe its effect must be to alienate from the Church of England the support of its own rising generation, and thus to facilitate the grand assault that will ultimately be made upon the Establishment. The part of the Bill to which I most strongly object as it stands is Clause 4. I think it rightly gives offence because of its cynically partial character. It is an artful bid for the support of the two sects whose creeds are most antagonistic to the Free Churches—the Roman Catholics and the Jews—but who are so strong politically that they have to be placated. The true effect of this clause has been strikingly shown by the figures which have been supplied to us in answer to a Question which I put to the Minister for Education a few days ago. I do not want to impute motives, but there is a discrimination against the Church of England in this clause which rightly alarms every member of the Church. The hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool spoke of 250 schools being taken away from the Roman Catholic Church. But no less than 8,800 schools will be taken away from the control of the Church of England under this Bill. Could there possibly be a more complete exposure of the partiality, and the intentions of this clause? I think I may fairly say that that is the intention after the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer this afternoon. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the clause was put in specially for the Roman Catholics and the Jews. He said that the clause had been forced upon the Government. Forced upon them by what? By political exigencies. [Cries of "No."] Well, I venture to contend that that is so. The President of the Board of Trade was not afraid to say the other day that all the Government asked for was "fair play and absolute equality in the eyes of the law for all well-behaved citizens. Their conception of absolute equality in the eyes of the law is shown by the figures in the Return supplied by the Minister of Education. But what did the right hon. Gentleman mean by "well-behaved citizens"? Are only the citizens who profess to belong to the Nonconformist churches well-behaved citizens? Are passive resisters well-behaved citizens? [Cries of "Yes."] These were the words used by the right hon. Gentleman. I come now to the language of the Minister for Education in reply to the Jewish deputation. When the deputation said to the right hon. Gentleman that they would still be at the mercy of the local authorities, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "You must trust the local authorities. I believe the local authorities will do their duty under these proposals to the Roman Catholics and the Jews, and I *trust* also to the Church of England."

Yes, but the right hon. Gentleman was not sure in the case of the Church of England! That remark really revealed what is the attitude of mind of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the protest of the Church of England. He makes no provision in his Bill for the improvement of education, or for its more economical administration. The right hon. Gentleman devotes forty clauses and two schedules to this special legislation for the benefit of two powerful sects, as was admitted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and he has done this in the hope of squaring their opposition. I do not know how far he has been successful in squaring that opposition, but I fancy it will prove as difficult as squaring the circle, and is likely to be attended with about the same success. This four-fifths clause, as it is called, is not a fair description of it, because that suggests that the Government is merely seeking to safeguard the rights of overwhelming majorities and is even offering them privileges which they do not enjoy already. It ought rather to be designated a one-fifth clause, because it is designed to enable an infinitesimal minority, which has no special claims, not only to force its views upon the vast majority, but to deprive that majority of privileges which it has earned by great personal sacrifices and which it has long enjoyed—to deprive it, indeed, of control over property which had been erected and maintained for specific purposes and for the benefit of children of all denominations.

The only other point to which I wish to refer is with regard to the optional character of religious instruction whenever it is to be given. Mr. Gladstone said that in the case of religious education the desire for it was least where the need was greatest. I say that if religious instruction is to be absolutely optional, if there is to be no compulsion, that will be equivalent to making no provision for religious education at all. Whatever the result of the denominational fight may be, I hope the Minister for Education will see his way to remedy this serious defect, or if if the right hon. Gentleman favours secular education let him say so honestly, and leave the name of religion out of his Bill altogether. At present it is difficult to know what his attitude of mind is as to what the religious instruction should be. The right hon. Gentleman seems to be balancing between two opinions, and looking for a working compromise between religious and secular education. He must know that a religion cannot be re-hashed or created by legislative ingenuity. The Japanese tried it, and sent a Commission of theologians all over the world to investigate every religion, and to make up one bringing out the best points of each.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I am content with the Christian religion.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: But the right hon. Gentleman cannot get all sects to agree as to what the Christian religion is. We all know that Mr. Gladstone described this kind of religion, which the right hon. Gentleman is favouring, as a "popular imposture." I almost tremble to think what language Mr. Gladstone would apply to this Bill. At any rate, whatever the Bill is, it is not "popular," it is an unpopular imposture; and I hope the good sense and honesty of the House will prevent its passing in anything like its present form.

*Mr. SNOWDEN (Blackburn): I cannot join in the hope expressed by the noble Lord, the Member for East Marylebone, that this measure when it passes into law will put an end to educational controversy. No one can have listened to this debate without feeling the hopelessness of the prospect of reconciling the conflicting interests in regard to education. And I do not hope therefore that anything I can say to-day is likely to bring nearer together these different views. However, I want to endeavour to place before the House the opinion of what I know is a very large section of the working classes of the community. During the last thirty-five years there has been a very great change in the opinion of the working classes in regard to education. To-day there is a far keener appreciation of the importance and necessity of education than existed thirty-five years ago. The return to this House of those with whom I am associated is one evidence of that change. There is no sentiment more heartily applauded at a public meeting of the working classes than a reference to the disinherited condition, from an educational point of view, of the working classes. That is a recognition of the fact that from an industrial and social point of view their minds tend in the direction of a better education. I want, therefore, to endeavour, as far as I may be able, to interpret to this House what I believe to be the overwhelming volume of opinion of the working classes on this education question. I take it that the intention of the present measure is to deal with the difficulties and shortcomings which have been manifested in the working of the existing Acts, and that any amending Education Bill introduced into this House should be based upon our experience of the operation of preceding Acts. The noble Lord said that so far as he was aware there was only one Return published giving the result of the experience of the working of all the Education Acts since that of 1870. We have an unrecorded, but nevertheless large measure of experience of the working of these Acts. The Education Act of 1870 established two principles, which are not disputed by any section of opinion represented either in this House or outside it. The Act of 1870 was passed as a result of the conviction that the State must take its stand on the civic education of the children of the State. That Act laid it down as a principle that it is the duty and the interest of the State to see that all its future citizens are provided with at least a minimum of education to enable them when grown up to discharge their social and industrial duties. That is what we might call civic education. The other principle was that it is not the duty of the State to require compulsory religious instruction. Nevertheless, the Act of 1870 did provide opportunities for satisfying the desires of that part of the population who wished for religious education. We have had thirty-five years experience of that, and what is the result? I should be very sorry to say one word that would wound the feelings of any person who holds the opinion that religious instruction should be given in the public elementary schools; but it is our duty to have the courage to declare the facts, however unpalatable they may be. Surely if religious teaching has an effect upon moral character it will have an effect upon the conduct of the children who receive the instruction. What do we find? A Return was presented to this House only a few days ago giving the religious training and the religious faith of all the prisoners in His Majesty's prisons on a certain day two or three months back. From that we find that out of 21,000 prisoners in those prisons upon that particular day more than 20,000 had been trained in the religious atmosphere of the sectarian school. More than 16,000 declared themselves as associated with the Church of England, while only 1,100 declared themselves to be Nonconformists, or to profess no religion at all. I submit that that is exactly what one would expect as the result of teaching theology to children. The very last thing to be taught to children is theology. No child can understand it, and even grown up men cannot. We have something like 400 different sects of theologians in this country, and they all give a different interpretation of the same teaching. I submit that the last thing in the world we should resort to for the development of moral character is theological teaching. The teaching of creeds is founded largely, if not mainly, upon superstition, and the teaching of them does not tend to develop moral character. The teaching of these creeds gives the child no intelligence to deal with the problems of this age. What is morality? According to the syllabus of the London County Council schools the children are to go for their morality to the lives of Abraham and of the other patriarchs, and to the lives and ethical knowledge of a people emerging from barbarism. What is called religious teaching is, I submit to the House, not religious teaching at all, and there is no connection between the teaching of theology and the teaching of true religion. The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone refuses to accept the doctrine that true religion consists of helpfulness and unselfishness, and that charity and love are the foundations of Christian teaching. What is Christian teaching? Surely if there be an intelligible declaration of Christian teaching you will find it in the first declaration made by Christ himself, in which He said that He came to bring good news to the poor and liberty to the bruised. What is religion? The only religion you can teach the children is to be good, to be kind, to be pure, to be helpful, and there can be no higher religion than that. The teaching of theology has had a most serious effect upon the efficiency of the civic part of our educational institutions. I do not share the opinion expressed by more than one Member of this House that our thirty-five years experience of the school board system is that it has achieved satisfactory and substantial results. I can speak with a certain measure of authority in regard to this question. The only education I ever had was given in a board school; I served for some years as teacher in a board school; I have served for many as a member of a school board; I know the working of the schools, and I am prepared to state, as a general statement, that in spite of all the money which was spent on our elementary schools during the last thirty-five years, the mass of the people to-day are little, if any, better educated than they were forty years ago. It is quite true that there are a larger number of people who can read and write, but in the absence of the moral inclination of the teaching given their example has been mainly to prove the truth of Ruskin's declaration as to the results of the present system of education. The instruction now given is of such an insufficient character that, in the majority of cases, after the children have been away from school for six months they have practically forgotten everything that they had learned. What is the reason for that? I submit that the main reason for the inefficiency of the secular part of our education is to be found in its association with sectarianism. My experience of the school board system has been that elections are fought out, not as between educationalists and non-educationalists, but between sectarians of one form and sectarians of another form, who try to get control of the local administrative machinery, in order that they may have an opportunity of inoculating the children with their particular theological ideas. Under the old school board system men were elected who knew nothing about education but upon sectarian grounds, and I myself know of the case of a man who could neither read nor write, who was elected a member of a school board simply because he happened to be a very substantial supporter of the local church. The evil influence of a system like that is incalculable. When the administration of education is in the hands of the local authorities the municipal elections are mainly fought on the question of religious education, with the result that the thousand and one important matters of social life and higher education are subordinated to the candidate's opinion upon teaching the children the incomprehensibilities of the Athanasian Creed. This position is absolutely intolerable, and it is the duty of this House to devise some means which will relieve us of it, and once and for ever release secular education from association with anything of a denominational character. Can this be done? I venture to think it can. We are agreed that it is the duty of the State to provide civic education but we are not agreed that it is the duty of the State to provide religious instruction. That is, in my judgment, an individual matter. I do not think that I need attempt to answer the clerics who say you cannot have any development of moral character unless you have the teaching of religion. They have a perfect right to hold that opinion, and I believe they are perfectly right to use every means at their own expense, and in their own spheres of influence, to propagate their opinions. But that is only the view held by sectarian people. It is not held by the majority of the people, and therefore a sect has no right whatever to impose its own opinions upon the majority. I think we shall all agree that it is the duty of the State to provide those things by State organisation and State expenditure upon which the majority of the people agree, or for which the voice of the people is unanimous in thinking that there is a public necessity. We do not agree that the teaching of theology or what in this controversy is called religion is a social necessity; therefore, instruction of this sort ought to be given by those who believe in it, though I think the State should permit every opportunity and give the fullest liberty to every sect to teach its own creed at its own expense and in its own time. It seems to me, therefore, that the solution of the question is quite plain. Let the State confine itself to teaching those things upon which we are all agreed, leaving to individuals or to associations of individuals the responsibility of teaching those things upon which we are not agreed. How far does the Bill before the House carry out this proposition, and how far does it redeem the election promises of the Party now in power? What was the election programme of the Liberal Party? I think no hon. Member associated with that Party in this House will dispute the fairness of what I am about to say. The Liberal education programme at the late election was public control of all schools, no sectarian tests, and no public money for the advantage of sectarian creeds. Those were the three points. How far does this Bill redeem those election pledges? Does it give us public control? What do we mean by public control? An hon. Member who addressed the House this evening expressed an opinion which he said he did not expect would meet with a large measure of approval in this House. He said he did not believe in the rule of the majority. I am a democrat, and I am unable to see any better way of ruling than by the majority. But there are certain things which I maintain a majority has no right to do. A majority has no right to interfere with individual action or individual opinion when that individual action or that individual opinion is not manifestly inimical to the welfare of society; therefore I think public control over education must be safeguarded by such provisions that even the rule of the majority shall not be permitted to violate individual right of liberty. What is going to happen if this Bill passes into law? The bitterness of the sectarian struggle for municipal votes is going to be increased a thousandfold. It is going to be the one thing upon which elections will be fought. What happened in the old school board elections? Different sects put forth their whole energy and strength to obtain votes, and they succeeded in getting sectarian teaching which did not represent the opinions of the majority. We shall have the same thing happening in the municipal elections. We shall have the control of the predominant sect to teach in the schools creeds which are not in harmony with the views of the people. It is declared that by the Cowper-Temple clause it is perfectly legal to teach a particular creed and we are going to have that. Then with regard to the sectarian tests. I know that half the differences of opinion in the world are due to the want of clear definitions. One hon. Member in a speech, which from the Christian spirit it displayed, must have touched the heart of every Member of this House, while admitting that inquiries should be made into the religious conviction of the applicant, denied that that was a religious test. What is the use of an inquiry unless it has a purpose? And what is the purpose of the inquiry? To ascertain the religion of the applicant, and unless the inquiry results in showing that the teacher belongs to the particular denomination, he stands no chance of getting the appointment. There are nearly 5,000 schools in the country that may come under the four-fifths clause. In those schools you will probably have not less than 25,000 teachers. Therefore, under this Bill, when it becomes an Act, you are going to have sectarian tests imposed on 25,000 civil servants. With regard to the third part of the Liberal programme that no money should be given for teaching in sectarian schools, does this Bill redeem that pledge? It does no such thing. We are told by the hon. Member for North Camberwell that it will cost £750,000 for the annual rent of the buildings of the voluntary schools and £750,000 for their maintenance, and therefore you are going to give £1,500,000 to the teaching of sectarian religion. The three cardinal points in the Liberal Programme are not redeemed by this Bill. I will not detain the House further upon that.

We have been told repeatedly by hon. Members that the secular solution is the logical solution of this question. I should not think of basing an appeal to my colleagues in this House for any proposal on the ground that it is logical, and I do not base my contention for secular teaching in the schools on that ground; I base it on the ground of common sense and practicability. The secular solution will not inflict any outrage on the conscience of any individual in the country. The secular system would only teach those things which the State has decided it is right to teach. We do not differ about teaching the children to read and write and the other subjects which are compulsory under the Education Code. There is nothing in the teaching of those things which is opposed to the honest convictions of a Catholic, an Anglican, or a Dissenter; all of them regard these things as necessary. It is quite true many of them regard something else as necessary, as a supplement to education. They can have perfect liberty to supplement it in their own way, with their own money. Hon. Members who have spoken have declined to support any immediate proposals for giving effect to the secular solution on the ground that, although it is the logical solution, there is no public opinion in favour of it. No public opinion in favour of a secular system of education! At the Trade Union Congress, representing two millions of the most intelligent of the thinking portion of the working-class population, they have over and over again unanimously expressed their demand for a secular solution of the education difficulty. The Labour Representative Conference only a few weeks ago gave a practically unanimous vote to the same effect. But the working-classes are not alone in making this demand. The President of the Board of Trade, while admitting that the secular solution was the logical solution, said it could not be carried out because there was no body of opinion in its favour. If the right hon. Gentleman were in his place I would direct his attention to a quarter with which he will agree. The Congregational Union of Wales met eighteen months ago; the executive had prepared a Resolution on the Education question, but an Amendment was moved in favour of the secular solution. And in this conference, where the religious feeling was very strong—it was composed largely of ministers—according to the newspaper reports the recommendation of the Executive Committee was rejected and the Amendment was carried by an almost unanimous vote amidst resounding cheers. I am informed that the right hon. Gentleman was present at the gathering. May I quote here just a word of one of the most influential men in the free Churches to-day? A few months ago Dr. Horton said—

> "More and more it seems to me the whole difficulty lies in the State attempting to give religious instruction. If education is to be efficient it must go on its way unhampered by the religious question."

Another eminent Nonconformist divine expressed similar views recently in the *Fortnightly Review*. I know there is an enormous feeling among the lay and ministerial members of the Free Churches in this country in favour of secular education. One hon. Member who spoke pointed out that it was quite wrong to say that the Catholic section of the Church of England was in favour of this Bill. The ritualistic section are in favour of secular education, and often publicly express themselves upon it. If the only difficulty of Members opposite is the fear that there is no public opinion in favour of this secular solution, let them disabuse their minds of it. The working men of this country would welcome it. As to the statement of the hon. Member for North Camberwell, repeated by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, that if there was no religion taught in our schools what would become of the poor waifs, surely respect for the work of the Christian Church ought to have prevented such a statement as that. What are our thousands of churches and thousands of ministers doing? What are the tens of thousands of Sunday School teachers doing to-day, and why are millions being spent on spreading Christianity abroad, if in a land boasting of a Christian people there are thousands of children in our slums who do not hear a word of the gospels except in the secular schools? If the statements of the hon. Members are correct, keep your money at home and spend it in Christianising your own people. If religious education were excluded from our schools, there would be a revival of energy and zeal on the the part of the Christian Church. I submit that this solution is not only logical, but common sense; it is the only practical way to treat this question, and that treatment, I am sure, will be received with hearty approval and satisfaction by the working classes of the country. And, after all, this is their question. It is not the question of nineteen out of every twenty Members of this House. I was surprised to hear the objections from the other side when the hon. Member for East Mayo was speaking yesterday, and an hon. Member opposite gave the House the information that the President of the Board of Trade sent his children to the elementary school. If the right hon. Gentleman does that he is a unique example of the middle class democrat. There are not two Members out of fifty in this House who send their children to these schools. I was struck when in obtaining some information upon the administration of education I discovered that nine out of ten of those who had been elected to administer the board schools were not sending their children to them. This is a working man's question. Hitherto the working classes have been asleep in their ignorance; they are now awake, and are not content to leave the education question to be the sport and plaything of the parson and the priest. No settlement will ever be permanent which is not settled by the people themselves. We feel keenly upon the question. We want all this sectarian strife out of the way, so that education shall no longer divide men, but that men of all religious opinions may unite in providing for the coming generation the best education possible. Realising as I do the disadvantages suffered for the want of a better education, the claims of the children appeal to me with special force. They are so poor and so helpless, and their future will be what we give them the opportunity of making it, and if we only give them what in justice is theirs, then I am quite certain when they grow up to be men and women what we see through a glass darkly they will see with a clearer vision. I am sure that by their education they will lay the foundation of a great country, an Empire whose foundations shall not rest then upon the ruined lives of its little children, but a nation and an Empire whose foundation shall be upon the health and the happiness of its people; whose wealth shall be in that merchandise which is better than the merchandise of silver and of fine gold. We shall come to that time, and I believe it is not far distant, when, as the greatest seer of the nineteenth century saw with prophetic vision, England as a Christian mother shall at last attain to the dignity and grandeur of a heathen one and be able to lead forth her children saying "these are my jewels."

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): Will the House allow me to say half a dozen words from the point of view of an agricultural Member? I have very great diffidence in saying anything on this subject, because I know very well I am not an enthusiast, a crank, or a fanatic on the subject of education in the agricultural districts. To speak plainly, I detest it so far as I am concerned. I am here simply as an agricultural Member, principally to keep the rates down, and particularly the rates for education. I remember in this connection that when the right hon. Gentleman the

President of the Board of Education was in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility, when he sat on this side and we sat on the other, he told us that we were a lot of Tony Lumpkins speaking of what we did not understand, and that we would rather have the money that was spent on education spent on artificial manures. The President of the Board of Education was not very far wrong from our point of view. If hon. Gentlemen opposite think that their Bill is going to bring the millennium, or a new heaven or a new earth, or anything of that kind, I should like to tell them they are very much mistaken. What we want is to have the enormous expense of education taken off the back of the land and the whole charge put upon the back of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If the Government would do that they would do a great act, because they would be able to get rid of these advisory committees dotted about all over the country, who seem to lead sleepless nights and laborious days seeking how they can put another penny on the rates, and manage the whole thing from an office in London. If the late Government had taken my advice and put the burden of the cost of education on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, they would not have had any grumbling about religious or denominational education, because what people do not pay for they do not grumble at. There is another question to which I should like to allude, and that is the question of the pious founder. It seems to me he comes very badly out of this Bill. Another question to which I would call attention is one from a purely agricultural point of view. I never can understand why, with the galaxy of talent at the disposal of the Education Department, they cannot alter their syllabus or curriculum so that the children shall be taught that which will be of some little use to them in after life. Why cannot they be taught the difference between barley and oats, and a mangold wurzel and a turnip? Instead of that they teach them what Goldsmith, in his *Vicar of Wakefield*, calls Shakespeare and the musical glasses. An agricultural labourer's children, when they leave school, know little of the practical work of life. There is another matter. Would it not be possible if you modified the curriculum in the schools to allow the agricultural labourer's child to leave school a little earlier? An agricultural labourer is not a rich man, and an extra sixpence a week means a good deal to him, and there is no reason why he should not get it if the curriculum is modified and made to include useful work. We do not object to education. We can stand a certain amount of it, and we respect the prejudices of our well-meaning neighbours and friends, but we do not want to be ruined by it in the agricultural districts. We do not want to be butchered to make an educational holiday. As to the education part of the question, it seems to me rather odd that the Education Department cannot take a leaf out of the Army List, as it were. In the Army, at least in my time, the Roman Catholic came into the schools at one time, the Nonconformist at another, and the Church of England parson at another. We never had any dispute. I know the Government will not put the charge of education on the back of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as many of us think they should, but I do hope that some notice will be taken of my suggestions that the agricultural labourer's children should be allowed to get away a little sooner from school, and that they should be taught something that will be useful to them when they have left school.

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down, by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means, under Standing Order No. 8, further proceeding was postponed without Question put.

MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD BILL [LORDS]. (BY ORDER.)

Read a second time, and committed.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Postponed proceeding on Amendment to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time," resumed.

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. MASSIE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): I am sorry that the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone has left the House, as I am desirous of offering some answer to his remarks. I do not doubt that the noble Lord wished to be fair-minded; but I hope he will forgive me for saying that his training has not been conducive to that end. To have belonged from birth to a privileged Church makes it hard to be fair to what are deemed the inferior sects. Most of our Church of England friends wish, of course, to be just; but privilege is a bad training for understanding what justice and equality mean. The noble Lord was quite right in saying that the Bill is not primarily an Education Bill. But it is a preparation for education. Certain obstacles in the way have to be removed before education can go forward. The dual system and the religious difficulty are two of these obstacles; and a political reform has to be carried out before an educational one. We wish the sphere of education to be a field and no longer an arena. The noble Lord has cast reflections upon religion in the United States of America. I know something of the United States. Of course, there is no Established Church there, but I hardly suppose the noble Lord would argue that it is on that ground that there is less religion; if he did so, it must be due to Anglican self-complacency. I cannot as an Englishman claim for England this superiority. What right have we to boast that we as a nation are more religious than America or the Colonies? The noble Lord quoted the diminished number of scholars in American Sunday schools, but he gave us no statistics. Even if he did so, we should then have to ask what are the real causes of this decrease. It is not fair to conclude at once that it is due to secular education in the primary schools—a secular education, let me add, that is supplemented, in most schools, by the reading of the Bible and prayer at the opening of the school. There is no comparison between the strength and organisation of the American Sunday schools and of Sunday schools in England. In America such schools are highly organised, are carefully superintended by the clergy and the denominations, and are attended by all classes, not merely by the children of the poor as in England. And I believe that, if Sunday schools in England were better organised, and if the churches, to use Milton's phrase, were to resume their "deputed duty," religion would be deeper and more enduring. The noble Lord has asserted that undenominational teaching is the teaching of Nonconformity. I remember that on a former occasion the noble Lord admitted that this undenominationalism is not professed by any church. How does he reconcile these two statements? But the very basis of Nonconformity is the objection to the connection of Church and State. That is taught in no syllabus in any school. One of the chief features in the Congregational system is the autonomy of each local church. That is taught in no syllabus in any school. The Baptists believe that the baptism of unintelligent infants is a ritualisic superstition, and that baptism is for adults when they made their personal confession of faith. That is taught in no syllabus in any school. These instances will suffice to show that undenominational teaching is not the teaching of Nonconformity. There is a certain unity, a unity of spirit, among various Nonconformist denominations, a unity exemplified in the Free Church Catechism in which the special differences are omitted. And I feel sure there is a similar unity of spirit among the various sections of the Anglican Church, in spite of the gulf that separates such men as Lord Halifax and Mr. Webb Peploe, and such organisations as the English Church Union and the Church Association, the Protestant Alliance, and the Society of the Holy Cross. But, looking at this gulf, we are entitled, when there is talk about definite Church teaching, to ask what this definite teaching is. There is another speech to which I wish to draw attention, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for West Birmingham yesterday. The course of this debate may well give colour to the view of those despairing people who believe there is no solution of the education difficulty, and who even think it would have been better for the State not to touch education at all. There has been the reappearance of the same old difficulties still unsolved. The same old clouds have flitted across the sky. The monotony has not been varied except by an occasional shooting star. Yesterday, however, we had a comet. Its appearance has been refreshing, even though its tail has been considerably curtailed. But it has been born out of due time. Its proper astronomical year should have been 1902. Why has it come so late? It was in 1902 that it ought to have portended secular education and the abolition of tests. However, better late than never; we have been glad to welcome the comet. Some of its features are, if I may coin a word, quite cometic. It has been instructive and suggestive to hear the right hon. Gentleman's apology for clericalism. He appears to defend it on the ground that it is not French, that is, not Catholic in a Catholic country. Now, when we attack clericalism, let it be understood we do not attack a Church. Clericalism is a spirit and, though differing in degree, it is always the same. It is not merely opposed to law, as the right hon. Gentleman has said it is in France; it is, as Gambetta has said, opposed to independence, to enlightenment, to stability. This spirit becomes incarnate in opportunity. In France it has tried to seize education. Its first step is obscurantism, its next, subjugation or persecution. We have been rebuked for saying that clericalism in England seeks only public money. I am not satisfied to make that charge; it seeks power, superiority, the maintenance of its own prestige. The right hon. Gentleman's illustration of clericalism is the political dissenter. He is as well aware as I am that the Church of England is essentially political. It is a State Church and cannot help being political, and its political position is represented by the bishops in the House of Lords. The right hon. Gentleman has thanked God for the House of Lords. Surely that House is the last refuge of the destitute democrat. It must be a democrat's experience that, if the House of Lords rejects a measure, it is likely to be a good one. And the right hon. Gentleman is, of course, aware that the Upper House would be opposed to his secular solution, being accustomed to stand up for the Established Church and to keep in their place the hostile sects, including that body to which I suppose the right hon. Gentleman still belongs. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has maintained the right of the parent. Well, this is a free country, and every parent has a right to teach his child the religion he prefers, or to provide for such teaching, or to withdraw his child from any teaching he dislikes. But he has no right to coerce the State into arranging, providing, or paying for his particular religion. The parent is only a part of the State; he cannot make the State his slave; it is for the whole State to decide how far it can go to meet the parent, and what is in this respect best for the nation as a whole. Any class whispering the word conscience may, according to the new doctrine, impose itself upon the nation. Is there to be no judge of such claims on the part of conscience? Are they final, whether the conscience is enlightened or not? The right hon. Gentleman the late Prime Minister now goes the same length, perhaps further, in maintaining the right of the parent. But how much did he do for the parent in 1902 in the 8,000 districts in which only one school is available, and that usually an Anglican school, to which Nonconformist parents are under compulsion to send their children, who are there subject to Anglican teaching or condemned to no religious instruction at all? That he has not removed this grievance has been one of the late Prime Minister's omissions, omissions in spite of his docile majority in the House of Commons and his facile majority in the House of Lords. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham could be called a missionary, the right hon. Gentleman the late Prime Minister, though he can lay no claim to Irish extraction, may be called "The O'Missionary." The right hon. Gentleman has found fault with the prohibition of teachers giving denominational instruction. This has been described by another hon. Member as "meanness." But at the meeting of the National Union of Teachers at Scarborough the executive brought before the general body a resolution to the effect that all denominational teaching should be given by other than the teaching staff. Teachers themselves, therefore, are in favour of this prohibition, this meanness. The reason is that they look below the surface and see the working of the opposite policy, how it practically reimposes tests, how it affects the teacher's independence, since pressure can be put upon him to undertake such teaching; and how it will affect his reputation for impartiality among parents of different religious views if he seems to take sides. It may not make much difference in towns, but in rural districts the danger is acute. For similar reasons of independence and impartiality the permanent staff in the various Government departments are not allowed to take sides in public political controversy. There is no suggestion that there is meanness in this. The right hon. Gentleman approves of the abolition of tests for teachers. But in his plan he is providing a reason for prying into the teacher's belief even at the time of his appointment. When the right hon. Gentleman expressed his approval of the abolition of tests, there was no cheer from the Party behind him. This silence suggested the query, "Who are the 'we'?" And even now the House is not sure whether the "we" is editorial or monarchical. Does the dual system obtain in the Unionist Party? Or is it a case of "I and my King"? But the right hon. Gentleman's own proposal is for the secular solution, the State keeping itself entirely outside the teaching of religion. This is logical enough, if the logic is not pushed to absurdity. The right hon. Gentleman's objection to the Bill is that it is illogical. So is his own proposal. He himself admits that there is a serious difficulty in its way: that it cannot be carried in the country, and that if the religious teaching is not compulsory it may be given to empty benches. So he proposes to get over the difficulties by compelling attendance, that is, by using the attendance officer as a recruiting sergeant; and also by bringing in the secular teachers as police to keep the children in order. But I would ask—are the children to be brought before the magistrates if they neglect to attend the religious teaching? And what is to be done with the teachers if they also decline to be police? And if the children are not to be summoned, how long will the system last? This is, after all, using the State in connection with the religious teaching it is not therefore to the point to twit those of us who are Liberationists with the names of Dale and Richard. But it is clear that the right hon. Gentleman is in favour of the two main points of the Bill—public control and the abolition of tests. The rest of the Bill is subsidiary to these. I can therefore claim that the right hon. Gentleman should vote for the Second Reading, and try to amend the Bill in Committee.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): I should like to send a ray of hope to one or more of the eighty-seven hon. Gentlemen who I understand are still anxious to address the House in this debate, by saying that I shall only stand for a very short time between them and their desire. That promise will only enable me to take one or two points in this great subject, which interests me, like many other hon. Members who have been directly and practically concerned with it for many years. I must repudiate the suggestion of the hon. Member for Northampton, which has already been rejected by the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone, that a member of the Church of England who opposes this Bill must necessarily be permeated with sacerdotal or clerical prejudice or with that kind of disloyalty to his own faith which is indicated by leanings towards Roman Catholicism. I have no such prejudice, still less any such leanings; yet I strongly oppose the Bill. I oppose it in the first place, because it does not effect its primary object, in support of which little has been said in the course of this debate, the settlement of the religious difficulty. The Bill is not an Education Bill, in the ordinary sense. It is a Bill to settle the religious difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Education, in the most striking passage of his opening speech, in terms excluded, one by one, all those objects one would expect to find in an Elementary Education Bill, as making for the improvement of elementary education, and then described its real purpose. He was—

> "a reed shaken by the wind amongst the icy blasts of sectarian differences."

and

> "Until we build and maintain a national shelter against these devastating blasts we shall make small progress and have no peace."

That is fine language, instinct with the true literary spirit. But fine language and literary merit apart, where is the national shelter against the icy blasts of sectarian differences that is to be constructed out of this Bill? What is the use talking about keeping the icy blasts out, when within you make your whole system a hot-bed of sectarian differences? The Bill does that by setting up four different ways of treating the religious difficulty: No religion; syllabus religion; mixed syllabus and denominational religion; four-fifths schools with complete denominational religion—at the will of the local authority. You reduce the schools throughout the country to a common level, and place them under the same set of authorities, abolishing the foundation managers, and thereby wiping out from 14,000 of them all the old traditions and influences and sincere and often tender attachments which gather round a familiar and trusted management, and which I believe—and have known—are an inspiration to childhood, and a pride in after life, replacing them by the dull monotonous, impersonal routine of county council or borough council managers. And in these schools thus levelled down you set up these four different methods of dealing with the religious difficulty, each one of which is bound to inflict injustice upon at least some of the children, or the parents of some of the children attending very school that come under it. And that is called settling the religious difficulty! Not one of these four different methods is the only just and adequate one; that, with no obligation to anyone to accept religious instruction at all, with full freedom of conscience and full power of withdrawal, parents should have the right to have their children instructed in the faith to which they belong. In spite of the derision of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to that right, we claim it because it is consistent with liberty, justice, equality, and freedom from strife both to the individual and to the State, because it is the only logical solution for a country in which denominational religious teaching has always formed a part of elementary education, and because it is the only barrier against the inevitable outcome of this Bill, which the Government dare not face—purely secular education.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in speaking of the "right of entry," of which he drew an appalling picture, used some singular terms. He talked about "branding the children with the letter of their denomination" as if it were something to be ashamed of to belong to a denomination. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no."] Yes, the very word "brand" implies shame. I do not believe the denominations with which the right hon. Gentleman is politically connected regard their religions in that light. And then the right hon. Gentleman went on to talk about teaching children the difference between denominations instead of the points on which they agreed. But that is simply begging the question whether denominations are a good thing or not. There is no such question before us. Denominations do exist; and we have to deal with the facts of the case. Once we adopt the principle of right of entry, applied within reasonable and practicable limits, difficulties present themselves, but they are only mechanical and structural. An extra room or two added here and there, even an omnibus or two where necessary to convey children—as they do on the Continent—to special denominational schools, is all that is wanted in most cases. As to the cost of the teacher of the religion, if he is not to be found in the school, there is hardly a place in the country where you could not find some earnest qualified denominationalist who, for a few pounds a year, would be glad to come in and give all the denominational teaching that is wanted. I believe the extra £1,000,000 a year now promised would cover the whole thing; but in any case the difficulties, such as they are, are not to be weighed for a moment in the balance with the great principles of the maintenance of religious education, equality of treatment to all denominations, and respect for the rights of conscience. The point, whether the cost should be borne by the State and the rates or by the denominations, is a matter to be decided by the light of two considerations. If borne by the State it would be a State recognition, stronger and more acceptable to many people than the establishment, of the value

Mr. Burdett-Coutts.

and power of religion—not this or that religion but all real religions—in the history, the life, and the destinies of the British Empire. But there is a second reason that appeals to me strongly. If cast on the denominations it would not matter to the Church of England; but it would matter to the poorer denominations, and it would not secure to all that real equality of treatment which I, for one, desire to see. The eloquent and pathetic history given by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, of the building of the Catholic schools in this country, still echoes in our ears, and I know it has its counterpart amongst hundreds of thousands of poor Dissenters who have made equal sacrifices for the preservation of their forms of faith, which are just as dear to them as in the case of the Catholics. As to teachers I subscribe to everything that was said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham about the prohibition of teachers from teaching religion. It is not only illiberal and illogical, but I think it has not yet been pointed out in this debate that it is the strongest encouragement you could give to the clerical elements becoming predominant in our schools. I subscribe, too, to what the right hon. Gentleman said about "tests" on teachers joining the great public service of the teaching profession. But I think that in schools built by and mainly devoted to any particular denomination, their traditions, character, and purpose should not be violated by a head teacher of any other denomination being forced upon them.

With regard to syllabus teaching, an extraordinary attack has been made that because we desire to teach a faith that is founded on the Bible therefore we are opposed to Bible teaching. That is a monstrous suggestion. What is really the position of denominationalists in this matter? It is that Bible teaching is and always must be a matter of how the Bible is taught; and that we prefer the form of teaching, the lessons and doctrines drawn, which compose both the foundations and the superstructure of the religion to which we belong, to which our fathers and forefathers belonged, and in which we wish our children to be brought up. We believe, each of us, of whatever denomination we may be, that a greater authority belongs to this form of Bible teaching than to any that a county council—even the county council of Hampshire—can invent or sanction. But because we believe that, to say that we are opposed to Bible teaching, is surely the last resort of prejudice, or Party tactics. I must leave the question of education if I keep my promise. But not the Bill; for I want to say a word or two about two great and grave public evils, outside education, that are certain to flow from it. The confusion this Bill sets up in the matter of religious instruction carries the spirit of sectarian animosity beyond the sphere of education. It forces that spirit in its most poisonous form into every representative local authority in the country, and the "wrangling," the "insincere issues," the "miserable squabbles"—to borrow from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India—will be planted upon the borough councils for ever, and enter into every election to them. You will have men elected to those bodies, not because of their personal fitness to take part in local government; or their tried service in that sphere; or because they will raise the rates or lower them; or because they are for or against municipal enterprise; but simply because of their religious opinions. That will be the crucial test of every man's fitness for a position which ought to be concerned with purely civil functions. I venture to think that no measure could have been more ingeniously devised to deal a fatal blow to the real interests of local government in this country, or to impair and confuse the full and free expression of the representative principle on which it was based. That is Part I. of the Bill. I will point briefly to another grave injury connected with Part II. The Government's intentions with regard to endowments are shrouded in mystery. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has made an attempt to explain, but he had in no way cleared up this question. The Bill gives the right to deal with endowments wantonly and violently. But all we know is that the Government is going to tamper with them; and that for this purpose they have set up a tribunal never known to English law and never dreamt of by justice-loving Englishmen, and one from which there is no appeal. What effect do you think this sort of legislation will have upon that great system of testamentary generosity to public objects, from which the less fortunate classes in this country have derived such incalculable relief and benefit? Do you think the system will be maintained? Do you think people will continue to leave their money to legitimate specific objects, for the public good, when they see that at any moment, at the fleeting fancy of a Party majority, the lawful conditions on which the money was left can be violated, and the bequest seized for some other object? A great change in testamentary benevolence is certain to date from the passing of this Bill.

*MR. LLEWELLYN WILLIAMS (Carmarthen District): I have one qualification for intervening in this debate which fortunately has been denied to every other Member of this House, and that is that I have listened to every speech which has been delivered upon this Bill. I do not claim that as an exercise of exceptional virtue on my part or that it is due to an overmastering desire to hear the view of every hon. Member on this Bill, but hon. Members who desire to speak, Mr. Speaker, have to go through the gymnastic feat of trying to catch your eye. I think after that experience I am able to congratulate the Minister for Education and the Government upon the reception of their Bill, in this House and in all quarters, for what has struck me is the undercurrent of acceptance of the two main principles of the Bill which has run through every speech that has been made. The majority of the speakers both above and below the gangway on both sides of the House have accepted popular control and no religious tests. If I might be allowed to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman who represents the Government in this matter, I would ask that after the Second Reading has been carried, considerable liberty of action and of speech should be allowed to hon. Members on this side of the House, when we come to discuss the details of the measure in Committee. I venture to think that if the right hon. Gentleman and his Government will see their way to do that, they will not only add to the value of the debate but improve the chances of the Bill, and they will evolve a measure which will be a settlement of this question for many long years to come. I do not pretend for a moment that this is a Bill which in all its features is wholly satisfactory. It is a Bill prepared by a composite Government, composed of Anglican and Roman Catholics, Scotch Presbyterians and English and Welsh Nonconformists, and, as the Secretary of State for India said the other night, of more than one Agnostic. It is impossible to think that a Bill of that sort would receive the unmixed approval of every Member of the House, and I, as a secularist, do not view with unmixed approval all the provisions laid down in this Bill. As a public man, however, I have to look at the question not merely from the theoretical, but also from the practical standpoint of facts as they are to-day. What is it that has made this Bill necessary? In a word, it is the Act of 1902. That Act not only devastated the whole realm of education, but it impaired and hampered the whole work of local government in the country. It is not too much to say that in many large districts it has brought about almost a state of civil war. There are over 60,000 passive resisters, respectable citizens who allowed their goods to be distrained upon rather than pay rates under the Act of 1902. Moreover 600 law-abiding citizens preferred to go to prison rather than pay those rates, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover has reminded the House of what has happened in the county councils in Wales. There was such a feeling in Wales with regard to the 1902 Act that, but for the intervention of the President of the Board of Trade, Wales would have been practically in a state of civil war. I remember, and a good many other hon. Members remember, what happened in Wales during the Tithe War. That was confined to three or four counties, but in order to keep peace 600 police had to be brought down on one occasion and on another the military had to be called upon. Now if the President of the Board of Trade had not induced the Welsh County Councils to act as they did, what would have happened under the Education Act would have been that the police and the military would have been called in, and if that had happened the state of Wales would, as I have said, have resembled a state of civil war. That was the state of things which confronted the Government, and it was to remedy that state of things that this Bill was introduced. If we were dealing with this matter for the first time, I may say, that I should be entirely in favour of secular education. But we do not come to it fresh. We have to deal with an urgent situation. Public opinion in this country I believe has not advanced enough to enable us to deal with education on purely secular lines. But there is such an emergency now that we must have a Bill passed dealing with the situation, and in my opinion, at this juncture, this is the best possible Bill that can be brought forward. Not only that, I would welcome any Bill which might be introduced, even if it did not go to the full length of secularism, which contained proposals which did not make against secularism. From that point of view, I think this Bill does take a step in advance in the right direction when it provides that no teacher shall be forced to teach religion, and that simple Bible teaching shall be henceforth given out of school hours. I welcome this Bill from another point of view, and that is that for the first time it gives to Wales autonomy in regard to elementary education. We have had in Wales autonomy in regard to university and secondary education, and as my right hon. friend said on Tuesday, four-fifths of the children in the secondary schools are drafted from the elementary schools, and it is a matter of urgent necessity that the same body who have authority over secondary education should also have authority over elementary education. There can be no doubt and no controversy in this matter, because not only have three out of the four Welsh Bishops and two Roman Catholic Bishops, as well as Nonconformists and members of the Welsh county councils met at Cardiff and passed a resolution in favour of this autonomy, but last year the late Government offered to Wales the same sort of council with much the same sort of powers which this Bill confers.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): I must call the hon. Member's attention to the fact that what was really proposed was a joint committee of the Welsh local authorities under Section 17 of the Act of 1872. It was an absolutely different thing from the proposed council for which no one is going to be responsible to this House.

*MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS: I cannot say who is going to be responsible to this House, but there must be some one.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: Where do we so find it?

*MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS: You will see it when the Order in Council is made. It is not suggested that the whole constitution of the Council is provided for in this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman trusted the Welsh County Councils and allowed them to enter into Committees and gave them powers.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: Powers to be conferred subject to the approval of the Board of Education.

*MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS: I do not wish to labour this point now; suffice it to say that it is a point to which we attach much importance. It is said that this Bill provides for Nonconformist teaching in the schools. I repudiate that statement with all the strength and earnestness in my power. What the Bill does is to perpetuate the system of "Bible teaching" which was first established by the Cowper-Temple Clause. Who was Mr. Cowper-Temple? He was not a Nonconformist. He was a Churchman, and that clause was assailed by Edward Miall and Henry Richard, and outside this House by the greatest leader of political dissenters that this country has seen, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham told us yesterday that he stands in exactly the same position upon this question as he stood thirty years ago when he entered this House. I am delighted to hear it. I have been out of sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman for some years past. He has wandered very far from the views which won my boyish admiration in the early eighties. The defender of the surrender of Majuba has become its avenger. The protagonist of free trade has become its antagonist. But on questions of religious liberty he has kept his record clean. In 1895 he voted for the Second Reading of the Welsh Disestablishment Bill. I suppose that we shall not find him to-night in the same lobby with us, but when we see him disappearing into the "No" lobby between the stalwart forms of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, who, on a historic occasion, compressed into a single word his opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, and the hon. Member for East Mayo, who was once described by the right hon. Gentleman as a very good judge of traitors, we his old followers and admirers will have the proud satisfaction of knowing that though he is absent in the body he is with us in the spirit.

Now one word with regard to the religious test. That is a question with regard to which Nonconformists and Liberals can have no compromise with any section of the House. It is one of the main principles of this Bill. The record of the Nonconformists in this matter is very creditable. They not only fought against the disabilities to which they were subjected, but they also fought unremittingly for Catholic emancipation in this country. In spite of the fact that no section of this country was more averse to the doctrines of the Church of Rome than the Protestant Nonconformists of England and Wales, they never allowed any sectional animosity to interfere with their desire to do justice and right to their Catholic fellow-countrymen. And when any occasion has arisen in the country or in this House to remove disabilities—to open the portals of this House to the Jew, the Catholic, or the Agnostic—the Nonconformists of England and Wales have always been true to their principles that religious conviction should be no bar to citizenship. I listened with great pleasure but with some discouragement to the excellent speech delivered on this question some days ago by the hon. Member for the Salford Division, and I was startled at the way in which the position of the Catholics was put. He said they are a people apart, a peculiar people, they are like the Jews—immune from obligations and entitled to privileges which other citizens cannot claim. He lumped all the Protestants of this country together. He saw no difference between the Welsh Nonconformists worshipping in a foreign tongue, and the Anglicans of England, but he did see a great difference between the high Anglican and the Roman Catholic. I repudiate that entirely. Any claim of that sort made on those lines is a claim which must end in peril to the State. I could put forward such claims for Welsh Nonconformity if I cared to do so. There are between 70,000 and 80,000 Welshmen living in London to-day, and it is computed that 50,000 of them are people who use Welsh as their familiar speech. What have they done in London in the last thirty years? I venture to say that to the Welshman his Nonconformist Church is as dear as is the Catholic Church to the Irishman, and the thing which is next dearest to his heart is the language—the language of his home and of his worship, his *differentia* among the nations of the world. When he comes to London and other large towns to settle, he is as anxious as any that his children shall be brought up not only to worship in his own religion but to worship in his own tongue. But he does not come to this House and ask the State to regard him as being in a different position from others. In the last thirty years the Welshmen in London have erected twenty churches where their children are taught to worship not only in their own religion, but in their own tongue. I do not put forward any special claim for exceptional treatment on behalf of my co-religionists and compatriots. With regard to Clause 5 of this Bill it is a clause that has strained almost to breaking point the loyalty of a great many Members sitting on these benches. I am myself prepared, if that clause is accepted as a settlement of the claims put forward, to vote for it. But if that clause is to be extended so as to make mandatory what is now only permissive, it will get rid absolutely of one of the great principles of this Bill. I do not think hon. Members from Ireland would thank me for not dealing with this point frankly and candidly. If we are to arrive at anything like a solution, and a settlement for some years to come, of this educational question it is only by a frank interchange of opinions across the floor of this House that it will be done. With regard to the first part of Clause 4 which it has been suggested should be made mandatory, I admit that when once you extend the principle of facilities at all it will be difficult to insist on its permissive character. With regard to the other half of that clause where permission is given to teachers in the "extended facilities" schools to give definite religious instructions, I not only say that it ought not to be made mandatory but that it ought not to be permitted at all. When once you permit teachers in these "four-fifths" schools, as they are called, to impart definite religious instruction it will be impossible for you, and every Member from Ireland says so too, and the hon. Member for Salford said so once or twice in the course of his speech, to leave out of consideration the religious convictions of your teachers, and in that roundabout way you will be imposing these religious tests on thousands of civil servants. If that is to be done I should prefer it to be done frankly and openly and not in a roundabout way. If the first part of Clause 4 is made mandatory no teacher will be safeguarded in regard to what is one of the main principles of the Bill, namely, that there shall be no religious tests at all. Though I have spoken as a secularist, I am a secularist because I believe in religious education. Cromwell was once reproached for not employing gentlemen as officers in his army. He replied that he preferred russet-coated captains who knew what they fought for and loved what they knew. Religion can only be taught by those who know what they teach and love what they know. There are two ways of getting to know whether a man who teaches religion really believes in the religion he teaches. One way is to impose a test—a very imperfect way, because, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer said this afternoon, for the honest man it is not wanted and the dishonest man will evade it; the only other way is to place religious teaching on a voluntary basis. The statement was made by the hon. Member for North Camberwell that if you withdraw religion from the schools there will be thousands of poor little children in this country who will grow up in an absolute ignorance of God. If that be true it is a terrible indictment of our boasted Christianity, but I do not believe it for a moment. A few months ago I had the privilege of attending some Welsh revival meetings, and what struck me most of all was the ease and range of the Biblical knowledge that was displayed by the working-men and working-women who took part in that revival. All the Biblical quotations were in Welsh, and I asked myself, how did these men get their knowledge of the Bible? It was not in the day schools, for even if the Bible is taught in the day schools it is the English Bible. No, it was at their homes or Sunday schools that they learnt their Bible, and I venture to say that if the blighting hand of the State is taken away from religion, if Christian denominations and Christian men and women of this country are allowed to feel that they alone are responsible for religious teaching in this land, the cause of religion will not suffer, but religion will be strengthened and purified, the sectarian animosities will tend to become obliterated, and Christians will at last begin to remember that their Founder came to bring peace on earth and good will among men.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down began his speech by affirming that this Bill had met with the unanimous assent of this House. Hardly were those words out of his mouth when he proceeded to appeal to the Minister for Education for much liberty of action in Committee, and he seemed to hint that he himself had some Amendment he wished to propose. I do not think the Bill has met with any general assent even on the Ministerial side of the House. The hon. Member for North Camberwell wished to amend it, the hon. Member who sat immediately in front of him and spoke for the Roman Catholics wished to amend it; the Irishmen wished to amend it; and certainly it has caused universal dissatisfaction on this side of the House. I do not believe it is accepted in the country. The Bill seems to be simply intolerable. It proposes to establish or to give a paramount position to what is called undenominationalism—a religion of the local authority. It forces that religion on those who do not wish it. It denies freedom to worship God to the section of Christianity in England to which I belong. It denies this freedom in the very schools that we own, and it forces on those schools another form to which they are unaccustomed. It does not ask what the parent wants; it asks simply what the local authority wants. It does not even give the local authority freedom. It denies them the free use of creed or formulary. Most undoubtedly this Bill is specially directed against the Church of England.

Why does not the Government, with its enormous majority, disestablish the Church, and thus settle the education question, and leave the sacred things within the Establishment alone? Why does it strike at the Church rather than the Establishment? Why does it stab the body rather than the clothes? It seems to me that you who attack the Establishment are about to erect another Establishment. In one or two particulars this is most certainly a Dissenting form of Establishment. The Church of England can hardly teach without formularies; a Dissenter can hardly teach with them. And, again, it is certainly a form of teaching which most of us who belong to the Church of England repudiate, and which most of the Gentlemen opposite accept. It is a step towards secularism, which the country certainly does not want. If the children need not attend school for religious instruction you practically delegate the authority and the control to the boys and girls at school to settle. I remember somewhere that Plato says that if a philosopher and a confectioner were to enter a Grecian schoolroom, and were to appeal to the suffrages of the boys, the confectioner would most undoubtedly be selected. And if religious education or any form of instruction comes into competition with the playground you may be sure that it is the instruction, religious or otherwise, that will suffer. Children need not attend instruction, and to teachers who do not believe in that instruction you will entrust the future greatness of England. I can only say that hon. Gentlemen opposite do not teach their own children in that way. They send them to receive instruction from those who believe what they are teaching. With reference to tests, you may have a test which is unjust. If you said that no teacher should enter the teaching profession who did not belong to the Anglican form of religion it would be a gross injustice. But the teachers having once entered the profession, where is the injustice to assign those who believe in Anglicanism to Anglican schools, those who believe in Romanism to Roman Catholic schools, and so on? For myself, I venture again to assert that this question can only be settled by conferring the full rights of citizenship on every religious denomination. I would frankly surrender those schools in towns like Eastbourne and elsewhere, when they are redundant; I would give the right of entry in the country. The Minister for Education said that was frankly impossible, and the President of the Board of Trade also made a remark to that effect. Why is it frankly impossible? Take the speech of the President of the Board of Trade yesterday. It seems to me that the first part entirely eviscerated the last. He said, on the one hand, that you cannot lump Dissenting forms of Christianity. He said, on the other hand, that divisions are breaking down. You do not value religion like the old-fashioned Dissenters who suffered for it. Do you value religion for its own sake as your spiritual ancestors did? If not, can you value religious equality as they did? How did the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Education commend religion to us? He said he recommended it to us because it idealised life, and the hon. Member for North Camberwell recommended it because he said it added to the beauty of life. All I say is, Well done religion! if it idealises and beautifies life. But it will not beautify and idealise life unless you have it for its own sake, and believe it for its own sake. Unless it is believed in for its own sake it will be founded on insincerity and will degenerate into a puling sentimentality. See the abyss that separates the right hon. Gentleman from us. We know that in religion we are standing on the very rock of life, and that we are in direct and personal touch with its one overwhelming reality. No wonder then you are willing to confiscate our form of religion. If the promoters of the Bill regarded religion not as a mere alternative to art or beauty, but as the one absolute sacred thing of life, as a solitary relation between God and man, they would then treat every form of religion with reverence, and they would not lay their blighting hand on the Anglican form of religion, because the representatives of the Church once in their inequity laid their forbidding hands on Nonconformity.

*MR. VILLIERS (Brighton): I should naturally be diffident of entering into this debate, were it not that having had some experience of educational matters, and having myself been a manager of several schools in different parts of the country, I think I may claim to know something of the subject now before the House. The few criticisms of the Bill which I propose to make I make in no unfriendly spirit or in a spirit which fails to appreciate the difficulties which the framers have had to encounter. I believe it has been said that when Jove carved the Geniuses, he made critics of the shavings. And on this occasion I consider myself only as filling the humble *role* of a shaving. The Government has made an honest attempt to deal with a complicated problem, a problem easy to understand, but difficult to solve. They have inherited a Tory tangle so impossible to untie that many knots may have to be cut. I take it that this Bill establishes the fact that the State is the grandparent of all, and, having taken up that position, the State should most assuredly treat all its children fairly and without favour. [OPPOSITION cheers.] I am glad to hear those cheers, because before it can do this it must redress any injustices which it finds existing between them. The first clause of this Bill, which places all schools under popular control, does this most efficiently. No longer will one denomination be denied a fair share in the management of the schools to which it subscribes. And the Church must recognise this as the result of its own action. The Church gave up its independence when it accepted assistance; it lost its head when it asked for alms. And when it insisted on an unfair representation on the board of management it caused that popular outcry which has resulted in this Bill. I am not concerned at the heroics emanating from the prelates. Their cry seems to be more for the Church than for religion. One of them actually said that their Church schools were built to avoid simple Bible teaching. If simple Bible teaching is considered by him and others like him to be a kind of poison, why in the name of conscience have they not removed Church children from board school teaching, as they might have done under the Conscience Clause? I can understand the Ritualists, who are Romanists in almost everything but name, objecting to simple Bible teaching without the priestly interpretation of it, but I have never been able to understand why the Cowper-Temple instruction should not be acceptable to the Low Church party. I cannot help thinking that had the Royal Commission on the illegalities in the Church, which is now sitting, issued their Report, we should not have witnessed the Dean of Canterbury and Lord Halifax on the same platform in opposition to this Bill. That the Commission has not reported up till now, I may mention in passing, I consider nothing less than a scandal. Be that as it may it is only my opinion; I will return to the Bill. I am not concerned, in spite of the eloquence of the right hon. Member for Dover, at the outcry against desecration of ancient trusts—an objection which reaches the high water mark of antiquated Toryism. I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that his own leader not only committed but confessed to this crime in his Bill of 1902. In any case I hold that nations must alter their condition as they grow. The dead hand must give way to the living body. I would also point out to the right hon. Member for Dover the absurdity of championing at one and the same time the ancient unalterable power of the trust and the inalienable right of the parent. Did the trust ever consider the parent? Certainly not. It never considered the parent at the time and it could not possibly do so in the future. The two principles are diametrically opposed and incompatible. The one is typically Tory and the other is distinctively democratic. This Bill very properly disregards the doctrine of the infallibility of the trust and it unifies education.

But when I come to the solution of the religious question, I do not consider that the Bill is quite so satisfactory. I rejoiced to hear in the speech of the Minister for Education when presenting the Bill that he had decided in favour of a religious and not a secular settlement. I am of opinion that education is no education that does not include religion. Secular education by itself is knowledge without principle. Of what use is it to inform the mind of a child if you do not form his character? You may get a statue without breath—you may have a perfect penny-in-the-slot machine, but does that come up to a living salesman? You must have religion in the schools, and the teaching must be given in the school during school hours. "Leave the religious instruction to the parents," say the secularists, but that would be to remove thousands of children from any religious instruction whatever. How can a woman who has to wash and cook, or who works in a factory, teach her child daily religion or ethics? The secular solution is what the Minister for Education wishes to avoid, but this Bill, in my opinion, will lead to that result; while appearing to preserve the people from secularism it is really driving them into it. It allows the withdrawal of the child from the school while religious instruction is going on, and it enacts that no teacher in any elementary school shall be required to give religious instruction. With teachers who need not teach, and children who need not attend, what chances are there of much religious instruction being either given or received? Then, indeed, hushed will be the familiar hymn, and banished the opening prayer. Coals to the parents and sweets to the children, a small additional fee to the teacher to compensate for a longer lie in bed in the morning, would be but poor substitutes for compulsory attendance during the hour of religious instruction. They would hardly prevent the parent from working the child, or the child from preferring the playground. And as to the permission of entry before school hours granted to some denominations in Clause 4, without compulsory attendance, it is not worth the paper it is written on. They already have that right both before and after school by the terms of their lease, if they can only persuade the children. The facilities conceded by Clause 4 are also illusory in other ways. Firstly, they are negatived at the will or the whim of the local authorities; secondly, they are not allowed in the rural districts, no matter how strong the denomination may muster; and thirdly, they are not to apply if the numbers fall short, even by one, of the required four-fifths. All these things operate very harshly. I also object to hustling the poor one-fifth out of the school, either to walk half a mile further, or cross, perhaps, three more dangerous crossings with the alternative of being brought up either as little Anglicans or Roman Catholics.

So much for criticism. I have Bovrilised my remarks as far as possible so as not to take up the time of the House. Now for a few suggestions from one, who though prepared to vote for the Second Reading, is determined to press Amendments in Committee. No doubt State secular teaching, with right of entry to all denominations in school hours as put forward by the Member for West Birmingham, is in principle perhaps the most logical solution. But it is not a practical one. The Nonconformists could not supply the daily religious teaching, not possessing either the endowments of the Church or the sisterhoods of the Catholics. I see no better present arrangement therefore than for the State to supply Cowper-Temple teaching—a teaching agreeable to the Noncomformists and not antagonistic to other Christian Creeds—as supplementary to denominational teaching which may be given and paid for by religious bodies in school hours. Having established the principle of popular control in the management of the schools, I would consider the wishes of the parents in the religious instruction of the children. I would give the right of entry to denominations in every school in the country, rural and urban, provided and transferred. Cowper-Temple instruction being given also in every school would obviate the necessity of removing the minority where a minority existed, and a coercive denominational canvas would be avoided, as there would always be an alternative for the parents. Of course, where you have a school of five-fifths of one denomination, as there would be in many Jewish and Roman Catholic Schools, that denomination would teach its own creed five days a week, and there would be no necessity for Cowper-Temple instruction in that case. The Chancellor of the Exchequer this afternoon brushed this idea of right of entry on one side, but he will have his separate pens on the two days a week, under the facilities contained in Clause 3, and I cannot help thinking that his difficulties to a general right will prove to be more in imagination than in fact. I do not claim for these suggestions that they are entirely logical, but Englishmen, it is said, love the Bible and hate logic. At this moment they are seriously concerned that each child shall be brought up with some knowledge of the relations of the creature to the Creator, and of time to eternity, with its consequent influence over conduct and character. They are also concerned that all sectarian tests and unfair disabilities should be removed from public servants, when engaged by the local authority. And they are concerned that no avoidable hardship or injustice should be suffered by any individual or denomination in the State. Perfection is impossible. My suggestions are a compromise. But I sincerly hope that in Committee this Bill will be so amended, on these lines, that while it may not be a final settlement of the question it shall not be a "penal settlement" for anyone concerned.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): The hon. Member who has just sat down in the earlier part of his speech expressed profound surprise that the Low Church Party of the Church of England should oppose this Bill. He admits, I gather, as, indeed, any one acquainted with the facts cannot but admit, that the opposition to this Bill is as strong with the Low Church Party as with any other section of the English Church, and that no man has used more vigorous language about its demerits than the leader of the Low Church Party in England, the Bishop of Liverpool. But surely the latter part of the hon. Member's speech supplied the answer to the first part? If I understood his criticisms of the Bill correctly, there would not be one line of it left after his Amendments were carried out. There is not a single leading provision which he does not wish to see altered. He desires to see religious teaching made compulsory, that it should take place in school hours, and he took one after another of the clauses to show how little they came up to his idea of what religious education should be. I hope that will convince him that the Low Church Party, as well as other Parties, are not without justification when they see in this Bill a great threat, not merely to the Church to which they belong, but to the whole interests of religious education, from whatever point of view considered. Before I come to narrower criticisms of the Bill, it is only courteous that I should reply to two Gentlemen sitting on the front Opposition Bench—I mean that I should reply to two Gentlemen sitting on the Government Benches who have made some utterances of mine outside the House the special subject of hostile criticism. I have been read a moral lecture by that fairest of all controversialists, the President of the Board of Trade, upon the misrepresentation which he alleges I have committed with regard to that clause in the Bill for which he publicly claims paternity. I never heard before of one Member of a Government saying, "That is the clause for which I am responsible"; but the right hon. Gentleman has made that particular claim and has alleged that I have done injustice to the child of his affections. I said that that clause, so far as education is concerned, was Home Rule for Wales in educational matters, and no human being reading that clause without comment or assistance from extraneous utterances could attach to it any other interpretation whatever. For the clause, if it does anything, declares that while the administration of the education law in Ireland, England, and Scotland is committed to a department representing which there is a responsible Minister in this House—[NATIONALIST cries of "No, not in Ireland."] I have had to answer in too many Irish education debates to accept that interruption; but, at any rate, even those hon. Gentlemen who criticise my statement as regards Ireland, will not deny that my statement is accurate in regard to Scotland and England. And this clause—I forget its number, but, at any rate, it is the right hon. Gentleman's clause—is one which does establish administrative autonomy for Wales while leaving every Welsh Member at liberty in this House to criticise the administration of education in England, Ireland, and Scotland. How the fleshless skeleton of the clause is to be clothed we cannot tell, but, as we find it, I stated its purport perfectly accurately, and I do not feel disposed to withdraw a single word that I said about it.

So much for the first of the moral lectures that I have received. The second was couched in impassioned tones by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who was indignant that I should have suggested that this Bill was directed against the Church of England. If it were worth while, I could quote utterances of Members of this House very much in that direction. But I do not wish to drag in independent Members of the House. I rest my case upon the terms of the Bill itself. Of course I do not attend Cabinet Councils, and I do not know what fervent protests in favour of the Church of England were made by the right hon. Gentleman. I judge by the terms of the Bill, and can anyone, looking at them, doubt that the Church of England was intended to receive worse treatment than either the Jews or the Roman Catholics? The Chancellor of the Exchequer told us this afternoon that the reason why there had been special arrangements made under Clause 4 was partly because the Government wished to give special privileges to the Roman Catholics and the Jews, and because having given them to those denominations it could not well withdraw them under the same conditions from the Church of England. That was in itself a suspicious admission. But he further told us that the justification for giving these special privileges under Clause 4 was that in towns of over 5,000 inhabitants there were alternative schools almost always to be found, and there were schools in which a very large proportion of the children belonged to one denomination. If the Bill had intended to be fair as between denomination and denomination, if the privileges given under Clause 4 were not given grudgingly to the Church of England, because they could not be refused, having been granted to the Jews and the Roman Catholics, why was this limitation of 5,000 inhabitants placed upon the measure? The two principles laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer were that there should be an alternative school, and that a large proportion of the scholars should belong to one denomination. Are those attributes to be found in no schools outside the 5,000 limit? They are to be found in Church of England schools in large numbers, but not in Jewish or Roman Catholic schools. And had this Bill been really impartial between these branches of the great Christian Church, I cannot understand why Clause 4 should not have been framed openly so as to give the same privileges as you give in towns of over 5,000 inhabitants wherever the conditions exist which you thus specially favour. I do not attribute to the right hon. Gentleman motives which he has repudiated; but he will admit, after my statement of my reasons for making my assertion, that, not having access to his innermost soul, and not being the confidant of his affection for the Church of England, I was not unjustified in putting an interpretation on it which I am now ready to withdraw in his favour.

Now, Sir, the President of the Board of Trade, in a speech of eloquence and violence, made an elaborate attack upon the Act of 1902. I do not quarrel with his dealing with the Act of 1902, because I believe this question can only be understood if it is dealt with historically. I do not agree with his criticism, as I shall show in a moment, but I think he was justified in dealing with that Act. But I suppose it was the force of long habit, the memory of innumerable speeches made in the same congenial field, which prevented him from going beyond the Bill of 1902 and coming to the Bill of 1906. Indeed, in all his eloquent oration, I was unable to discover a single attempted answer to the criticisms that we have passed upon the measure for one part of which he is in his individual capacity responsible, and for all the parts of which he has collective responsibility. I have said you ought to approach this question historically, and so you ought. The Member for the Louth Division of Lincolnshire, if he will forgive me for saying it, had the amazing courage to describe the Bill now before us as a moderate and reasonable measure very unlike the Bill of 1902. Well, Sir, let hon. Gentlemen reflect upon the position we were in in 1902. In 1902 the education system of this country was a by-word to every educationally advanced nation of the world. It was a matter of derisive laughter. ["Oh."] The hon. Member who interrupts me will be surprised to hear that I mean secular education. There is such a thing as secular education, and our system of secular education was a by-word amongst every advanced country in the world. It had to be dealt with in a broad and comprehensive spirit. Secular education was dealt with in a broad and comprehensive spirit, and on the foundation then laid you, the majority, are going to build up anything you can do, if you can do anything, to improve the existing educational system of the country. You have not attempted, you do not mean to attempt, to alter it; you are wise not to attempt to alter it. It remains the broad basis upon which secular education for our children and, I believe, for our grandchildren is going to be framed. Now, Sir, we could not deal with the great secular needs of this country without touching the question of the voluntary schools, which educated more than half the children of this country, and we could not touch the question of the voluntary schools without touching the question of religion. Are hon. Gentlemen so ignorant of what that Bill contained as really to suppose that we dealt with the problem which we could not put on one side in otherwise than a liberal spirit?

AN HON. MEMBER: Ask the country.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I ask the hon. Gentleman. We found an Act in operation dealing with the voluntary schools and the board schools, an Act passed by a great Liberal Administration. It would have been folly to have attempted some great reform such as that adumbrated by my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham yesterday. We could not possibly have dealt with the great problem of secular education which was before us, and at the same time abolish the Cowper-Temple clause and abolish the voluntary schools in their present shape. Both the Cowper-Temple clause and the voluntary schools had to be left. To abolish the voluntary schools and leave the Cowper-Temple clause would have been the grossest injustice to one great body of opinion in the State; to abolish the Cowper-Temple clause and leave the voluntary schools would have been an outrage on another great body of opinion in the State. Illogical though they are admitted to be, both had to be left. That being the case, could we have dealt with the question better than we did? We found under Mr. Gladstone's Act a system under which the pupil teachers in voluntary schools, unless they belonged to the Church of England, could do nothing; we cured that. Under Mr. Gladstone's Act we found innumerable cases in which schools were under the control of one clerical manager; we cured that. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."] Until one equals six it cannot be denied. We substituted six managers for one manager. We found that, so far as local control was concerned, there was no representative element in the voluntary schools as regards secular education; we made the control of secular education complete from top to bottom in every school throughout the country. We found there was no machinery in existence for adequately training for the teaching profession men who did not belong to the Church of England; we provided machinery by which this teaching for men not belonging to the Church of England could be provided. We found a large number of parishes in which it might seem to the local authority that the education ought not to be left to the voluntary schools; we gave them power under certain, not harsh or stringent, limitations to build another school side by side. In every one of these great particulars—not details, but vital elements of our education system—we found a method established by a Liberal Government and we corrected it. [MINISTERIAL laughter.] Can any of the numerous Gentlemen who are not averse from interrupting me, show in any particular how we made it worse for the Nonconformists? [MINISTERIAL cries of "The board schools," and "Putting Church schools on the rates."]

Now that is the system, with its admitted imperfections of the Cowper-Temple clause on the one side, and the single-school area on the other, with which you have got to deal. How have you set about it? I understand from the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other speakers that you have been driven to put before us this strange legislative effort by what you call "the mandate of the general election." It is not often that I have the fortune to agree with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton, but with one observation he made this evening I do heartily agree. He said that this talk of mandates had now reached a point which was really unconstitutional. It would have made Edmund Burke turn in his grave. The logical argument of some of the utterances we have heard to-night on this subject is, as the hon. Member truly observed, that this House might resign its function of discussion altogether and the clerks at the Table would sit simply to record the mandates—the various and numerous, in fact the almost innumerable mandates, by which we appear to be governed. But in this particular case I do not think we need trouble about the mandate, because it will be admitted that no mandate will be binding which those who give it do not themselves understand; and I have some reason for thinking that the Sovereign people do not understand these two particular mandates to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer made reference, because I observe that their representatives do not understand them. Where the same so-called mandate is understood in quite different ways by different people sitting in different parts of the House, I think we may rest assured that there was some confusion in the original source from which these mandates are supposed to have derived their authority.

What are these two mandates? They are that you are to establish popular control, and to abolish tests for teachers. Is either of these understood in the same sense, or in any sense, by the authority? Take popular control. There is popular control now, under the Act of 1902, so far as secular education is concerned. Therefore the mandate must have referred only to religious education. Does this Bill establish complete popular control as regards religious education? The Education Minister has told us that, in his opinion, it is an obligation—a moral though not a statutory obligation—upon the local authority to select for particular schools teachers of a particular creed. Does that mean there is complete local control over these schools in religious matters? I should have thought when you were giving mandatory instructions to the local authority that it was to select teachers of a particular religious complexion, you must abandon the claim that you have established complete popular control in religious matters, and if you have ever received the mandate you claim to have received, you stand convicted of disobeying it at this moment.

Then how about the tests for teachers? I think it has been pointed out before, and I think by my noble friend this afternoon, that the only clause dealing with tests for teachers is this—

> "A teacher employed in a public elementary school shall not be required as a condition of his appointment to subscribe to any religious creed."

Does anybody in the House quote an authentic case of any teacher, at any time, being required to subscribe to a religious creed? ["Oh, oh," and "Yes."] I do not at all deny that there may be such cases, and, if so, I do not in the least object to their being prohibited. I think it is a very foolish way of dealing with the situation. But if anybody pretends that it has been a practice of the Church of England or of the Wesleyans—I am not sure about Roman Catholics; I have been able only to make inquiries as to the Church of England—if anybody supposes it is the practice in Church of England schools to ask a teacher to subscribe to a religious creed, he is profoundly mistaken. That is the only thing forbidden by the Bill; but perhaps hon. Gentlemen desire that the Bill may be altered, strengthened, and so modified as to include a case which ordinarily does happen, no doubt, in a denominational school—namely, that the managers of the school, those responsible for the selection of the teacher, do ask if he is prepared to teach the religion of the denomination to which the school belongs, and whether he is fit to teach it.

AN HON. MEMBER: And believes in it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That goes with the question of fitness; no doubt that is ordinary practice. And it is not forbidden in the Bill. Do you want it to be forbidden? Do you? ["Yes."] One Gentleman says "Yes." One faint, solitary voice comes from the whole of that great Party opposite. I abstain from commenting upon murmurs that come from hon. Members upon my observations, but may I not comment on the silence? I should like to know what the general opinion is as to what is admitted to be the ordinary procedure in the selection of a teacher. Whatever hon. Gentlemen opposite may think, the Government, at all events, have made it perfectly clear that they think the habitual practice by which teachers are selected for voluntary schools is justifiable, is not an interference with the conscience of teachers, is not a test within the meaning of the mandate. Then how are we to understand this mandate? Was I not right in saying the House itself did not understand it? If the mandate merely was that the teacher was not to be allowed, in words of the Bill, to subscribe to a religious creed, I, for my part, should regard the clause as perfectly illusory, but perfectly inoffensive. I should approve of it. I cannot conceive why teachers should be obliged to subscribe to these formal creeds, and I do not believe it is practicable to ask them to do so. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh!"] There is one Gentleman who really knows more about it than I have an opportunity of knowing, the hon. Member for North Camberwell, and if he contradicts me and says it is habitual I should say this clause is necessary and desirable.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): As the right hon. Gentleman appeals to me, may I say it is quite a common practice in denominational schools for an advertisement to be issued that the teacher must be a member of the Church of England and very often that he must be a communicant?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is not provided for in the clause, and I do not believe the Government mean to provide for it. I think they are conscious of the extraordinary absurdity of getting teachers, whether to teach Roman Catholicism or Anglicanism or Wesleyanism in these schools under Clause 4, without making adequate inquiries as to whether they really heartily accept the teaching of the denomination whose children are to be committed to their charge. Then, am I not right in saying that these mandates on which you are bringing in this Bill are not understood even by the House itself and form no adequate foundation for legislation like the present? I am told that we must not be too logical in these matters; and if that means that it is very hard to frame a Bill dealing with the various passions, interests, and traditions of the sects of this country, which would be on a symmetrical plan, I agree. Unless we come to some such plan as that of my right hon. friend, logic is clearly impossible, but where we might have logic with advantage is in some of the speeches which are delivered on this question. For five years I have been denounced as a violator of the fundamental principles of civil and religious liberty; I have been regarded as, I suppose, the slave of clericalism, the man ready to sacrifice everything for a particular denomination, and in making that sacrifice to violate immutable principles. I think, therefore, we may complain of the want of logic when we find that the very men who on every platform of the country have been hurling these denunciations at my head and at the heads of others who agree with me, are themselves guilty of the very crimes they attribute to me. They themselves are sanctioning what they have described as tests to teachers. They themselves are depriving the local authority of that absolute control over religious teaching which is the only control not given them in full measure by the Act of 1902. This Bill is to cost £1,000,000 a year at a time when, I understand, we are under the happy rule of a Government pledged to economy, and when we have a nightly Resolution half of which, at any rate, is in favour of economy, however much the other half may be in favour of additional taxation. What are you going to get for this £1,000,000? We gave in the Act of 1902 more than £1,000,000—I think it was £1,400,000 a year. That at all events went to education. It went either to lighten the burden or to improve the education of the children of the country. Your million—what is that going to? ["To the Church."] It is not going to secular education, any way—not one shilling of it. It is not going to help you to fulfil the mandate, because, as I have explained, you do not propose to fulfil the mandate as defined by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and others. Is it going to help the ratepayer? It is going to prevent the ratepayer from suffering as much as he otherwise would by deliberately cutting himself off from the assistance of those ready to assist him; it is not going to make the burden of education, heavily as it presses on many districts of this country, one shilling the better. Is it going to help religious education? Will anybody pretend that after this Bill is passed there will be either in the provided schools or in the denominational schools under Clause 3, or the specially privileged schools under Clause 4, either better education, a better system of religious education, or the prospect of a better system of religious education? Is there any man who has the courage to get up and suggest that that will be the case? I see no respect in which this million of money is going to improve religious education; I see many respects in which it is going to impair it. It is going, for example, to take religion out of the compulsory school hours. Would you encourage arithmetic by taking it out of compulsory school hours? Or geography? Or any subject of secular learning? Do you think you are going to aid religious teaching, which the last speaker and most speakers on that side of the House have told us, in varying but harmonious terms, is the very foundation of religious education, by taking it out of the compulsory hours? No man has ventured to suggest that as a possibility. Do you think you are going to improve it by preventing the experienced teachers in voluntary schools, anxious and ready to take their place on the two days a week you are going to allow in voluntary schools, to teach the form of religion for which subscribers gave their money? Do you think you improve the teaching of religion by saying to teachers not willing to give it, to some outsider, "You shall give it"? The hon. Member for North Camberwell has only one answer to give to that, and that answer is in the negative. And are you going to improve religious education by publicly advertising the fact that it is not the House of Commons, or Parliament, that it is not the religious bodies, that it is not the local bodies who are finally to determine whether religious education should be given at all, but the teacher? You have, by the provisions of this Bill, put it in the power of the teacher to teach when he wishes, but you have restricted the absolute power not to teach when he does not wish it. And in doing so you have practically handed over that religious teaching which you all agree should be the foundation of the training of our youth—you have taken it out of the control of the authorities created by the Act of 1902 and you have given it to a body upon whom I do not wish to make any comment, but in whom, after all, it should not rest to determine whether any and what teaching should be given in the schools. There are gentlemen who tell us that by putting checks on denominational teaching they have greatly improved Bible teaching, as they call it, as a whole. Well, Bible teaching is a most ambiguous term. It may be nothing more than reading to young children extracts from the Bible, without explanation and without comment, treating the greatest and not the easiest book in the world as you would treat Milton or Shakespeare or any other author or body of authors. It may mean, on the other hand, that full dogmatic teaching on which all Nonconformists are agreed. [Cries of "No."] Well, this is out of the explanatory note to the Free Church Catechism—

> "It is the substantial agreement of the evangelical Free Churches in relation to the fundamental and essential truths of Christianity."

It may either be the Bible teaching I have just described or it may be the full dogmatic teaching which is allowed in our board schools, because many denominations agree to it, but which would not be allowed if this very collection of questions and answers had been compiled by the Wesleyans alone, or the Baptists alone, or the Congregationalists alone. They have agreed, and, therefore, under our strange procedure it ceases to be denominational, and it becomes fundamental to Christianity. At all events, it is a full body of dogmatic teaching, and the whole scale is open to provided schools whether they set up teaching which hardly amounts, under certain conditions, to the teaching of religion at all, or teaching with explanation, with comment, and with a view to the great truths which Christian societies have always extracted from the sacred book. Are you going to leave it entirely to the teacher to determine which of these teachings it shall be? You are, under this Bill, leaving it to him absolutely; he has only to say to the local authority, "I am ready to read the Scriptures without comment, but I am not able to give the catechism of the Free Churches," and the local authority has to give in. Is that an advantage for the teaching of religion? I assume, as surely I am justified in assuming, that for your million of money you are not going to get better religious teaching. There is only one thing you could get, and that is religious peace. Are you going to buy religious peace with this million of money? Do you think you are setting the right way to work to deal with a problem the difficulties of which I am the last to undervalue, because I had to face them—do you think you are setting the best way to work to complete the labours which the Parliament of 1902 attempted to deal with? I think it is folly. There are gentlemen who seem to think that, while the Jews have a case against school board teaching, while Roman Catholics have a case against it, the Church of England are to allow the Cowper-Temple clause to remain untouched in their schools, and to see with equanimity this diversion of the funds which they have given to the cause of religious as well as of secular education. Nothing astonished me more in the speeches, otherwise very different, of the Minister for Education and the President of the Board of Trade than that neither of those two eminent Gentlemen referred to the fact that the Church of England had spent millions in the cause of secular and of religious education. There were many compliments, deserved compliments, paid to Gentlemen below the gangway. Does the Church, which boasts the Member for Northampton as one of its members and many Gentlemen on this of the House, deserve no credit for all that it has done? I make an exception, by the way, of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who did full justice to the Church of England. But does that Church not deserve credit, and do you suppose that a Church that has amongst its members more than half the population ["No"] of this country is going to see placed upon it what is a manifest and obvious injustice? If right hon. and hon. Gentlemen came forward and said, "We allow the system is anomalous and difficult, we allow the Cowper-Temple clause on one side is indefensible, that the single-school areas may on the other side inflict injustice on the Nonconformists, we sweep both away," I should understand it; and if they superadded to that broad policy real compulsion for religious education in school hours by those teachers who had the confidence of the parents of the children, then they would come to the scheme of my right hon. friend. And I should say again that is right or wrong, possible or impossible, but at all events both a logical and a practical course. But what they are doing satisfies no requirements of the country, it carries out no policy which anybody desires, it does not help the ratepayer, does not help the educationist, does not help the man who desires this undenominational teaching, and it profoundly injures the man who desires denominational teaching. It leaves this question more insoluble, with a future before it even more obscure, more full of doubt and difficulty, than it was before the right hon. Gentleman took this great task in hand. The Government have promised us that they will have an open mind for Amendments; but as was sufficiently clear from the speech which immediately preceded my own, there are no Amendments which will meet the general views of the House which will not tear their Bill to tatters and leave not one fragment or wrack behind as expressing the collective views of a united Cabinet. I doubt whether it is worth while for the Government to go into Committee with the view of modifying their Bill to an extent which alone would make possible a satisfactory solution of this question. It would be a happier and wiser course if they were to withdraw it altogether and recast it, to adopt new principles. If they think that inconsistent either with sound policy or with their dignity, I can only say that, either in this House or in the country, they are predestined to find arrayed against them forces, both within their own ranks and outside their own ranks, which will compel them to make this measure dealing with religious education something distantly approaching an impartial settlement of the question.

MR. BIRRELL: Once more, Sir, at the request of my right hon. friend the Prime Minister, I rise to attempt to do the impossible; for I think even the practised debaters whom I see in front of me will readily admit that to me, at all events, even to attempt to mete out what is called Parliamentary justice—and at the best it is but a small modicum—to all the arguments, aspirations, recantations, beliefs and unbeliefs, emotions and sentiments which have found adequate, and sometimes eloquent, expression in this long debate, would be a sheer impossibility without trespassing far longer than I intend to do upon the vast tracts of time which the suspension of the eleven o'clock rule has placed unreservedly at my disposal. And let me add that the difficulty of my task, which I cannot pretend not to feel, is all the greater in that I have to follow the late Prime Minister, who is not only, as all admit, a master of dialectics as practised in this House, handling with light grace a weapon which constant use for twenty years has kept bright and keen, but who is also, as all will admit, an expert in the gentle art of how to get an Education Bill through this House, whilst he is a living example of some of the ill-consequences that follow from an ill-considered measure. The right hon. Gentleman has learned in suffering what to-night he has taught, not indeed in song, but in impassioned prose; and I should, indeed, be a very headstrong, very obstinate, and very conceited man, if I did not take to heart some, at all events, of the things that he has said. The Act of 1902 has cost the right hon. Gentleman and his Party dear. The spectacle to-night of the right hon. Gentleman stranded, as it were, upon one of the rocks on which he ran the ship aground, surrounded by a sturdy band of the survivors of the crew

—storm-tossed and weather-beaten mariners—and taking as the text of his wide discourse the very cause of that disaster, may very well afford to all of us food for reflection and very grave deliberation. Even though we are possessed of a great majority, flushed with victory at the polls —that, I believe, is the right expression—I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I am the last man in the world to need to be reminded of the vicissitudes of things, or the mutability of human fortunes. Parlimentary majorities come and go. They vanish like the morning vapour. They shrivel up and disappear like leaves before the wind. I know all that perfectly. But, believing as I do that the main and essential and dominant principles of this Bill—and it is, after all, these, and these only, we ought to have been discussing during the last three days and a half—believing that these principles line the path, the inevitable and predestined path, of our political progress in this country, I am well persuaded that this Bill—faulty as it may be in detail, capable of amendment as no doubt it is—will promote the cause of peace and education; and I say that because I believe it to be in full accord with the wishes of the nation. I must say that I hardly recognise the now familiar lineaments of this Bill in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. For myself, I hardly find it possible to believe that the right hon. Gentleman was really referring to it. He asked for a copy in the course of his speech. With some difficulty it was provided for him; but he paid to it but scant attention. I am afraid there is nothing unusual in Party politics with this way of dealing with our rival measures. I was reading only to-day a speech made by the right hon. Gentleman to his constitutents in Manchester in October, 1902, when his own Bill was in straits. Referring to his opponents, the right hon. Gentleman asked whether it was the Bill they objected to, or their own extraordinary travesty, parody, and caricature of the measure. That is the way of Party politicians when they deal with rival measures. I can only describe the right hon. Gentleman's version of this Bill in the right hon. Gentleman's own language as a travesty and caricature.

It has been well said by various speakers that Clause 1 of Part I. is in substance and effect the whole of that part of the Bill. But I cannot agree with those who say there is nothing in the Bill except Part I., or that the Bill does not contain many educational provisions of great value and importance also, if our educational system is to advance along proper lines. But, nevertheless, Part I. is the portion which has received the almost exclusive attention of those who have taken part in this debate. Now, nobody denies that Clause 1 of Part I. does secure, will secure if passed into law, complete popular control over all the public elementary schools of the country. We all know perfectly well what it is our constituents sent us here expecting us to do. There never was such a terribly long general election as the one we have just gone through. Those of us who were not in the late Parliament were before our constituents for something like two and even three years—a purgatorial process, a tiresome, wearisome operation. All of us had an unusual number of occasions of meeting those who became our constituents in some cases, aud discussing these matters with them; and I say unhesitatingly that this Clause 1 was the inevitable outcome of the result of that election.

Now, what follows from Clause 1? I quite know that in addressing the right hon. Gentleman the late Prime Minister I am addressing a man who has pondered and thought over a very difficult problem, who has put forth more effort and devoted more time to it than probably anybody else in this House, namely, to give complete popular control over denominational schools without destroying their denominational character, and remodelling their trust deeds. I have had occasion, and it has been my duty during the last few months, to read the whole of the debates on the Bill of 1902. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London does not believe it. I can assure him that, with some few exceptions, this statement is practically true. I have lived his life over again during these weary months, and found myself thinking his thoughts. He found the task an impossible one. He did as much as he could. He put the voluntary schools on the rates. He gave secular control, but not including full control over the appointment of the teachers; and he gave the control of the religious instruction in those schools to a body of managers, of whom, as he has reminded us, two were the representatives of outside authority. When he did this the right hon. Gentleman tore the trust deeds of the voluntary schools in two. This is the model trust deed.

[The right hon. Gentleman here read the model trust deed; and continued:]

When this question came before the Committee on November 27th, 1902, the aspect of the case did not escape the attention of the hon. and learned Member for North Louth and Lord Hugh Cecil. Lord Hugh Cecil at once pounced upon this strange, new doctrine of appointing a body of managers, some of whom were outsiders and intruders, giving to that body the control of the religious instruction in those schools contrary to the language of the trust. The noble Lord said that they were State schools for State purposes supported by the State—

> "But was it to be understood that for the purposes of religious instruction these schools were to be regarded as State schools? . . . It seemed to him very strange that when they were professing to keep up Church schools they should violate the trust deeds at the same time in one of the fundamental principles of the Church."

The best answer given to that by the late Prime Minister was that—

> "Trust deeds are things which the House ought to be reluctant to interfere with. But when we are remodelling the system of elementary education in the country I say such a process is absolutely impossible unless you remodel the trust deeds. . . . The only choice was to leave the voluntary schools outside your educational system, with the voluntary schools untouched, uncontaminated by any interference on the part of the House, and without any part in the education of the youth of the country."

We are to-day seeking to complete the happy work of the right hon. Gentleman. We are attempting to make the control complete by giving the appointment of the teacher to the local authority, but we do not destroy—at least I hope that we do not destroy—the denominational teaching in the transferred Church schools. We anticipate the continuation of that teaching on two days of the week. It may be asked—Why two days? Because, after the most careful inquiry, we find that it is only on two days of the week it has been the custom or practice of the managers of those Church schools to give definite Church Catechism teaching. You cannot always be teaching the Church Catechism. The Prayer Book requires graver treatment and is a better manual even than the Catechism; but any one who has had any acquaintance with the practical details of education must recognise that it would be quite enough on two days of the week to give this definite dogmatic instruction. Clause 3, until it was explained by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his lucid and admirable speech, seems not to have been understood by Gentlemen opposite. I think they must now, at all events, understand its meaning to be plain—that if the trustees of any school make this particular stipulation, before transfer, that there should be these facilities given on two days of the week, the obligation to permit that teaching becomes statutory. The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head, but I think he will find it is true. Supposing we had stopped at Clause 1. What then would have been the position of the owners of these voluntary schools? They would have had either to transfer their schools, as they can do under Section 23 of the Act of 1870, or to remain outside the scheme of national education altogether. Provision is made in Section 23 of the Act of 1870 for arrangements being come to voluntarily, as in Clause 2 of this Bill, between the owners of the voluntary schools and the local authorities for the transfer of the schools to the local authorities for the purpose of carrying on the work of a public elementary school. It has always been assumed—I do not know why—that that bargain must be unaccompanied by any pecuniary consideration, and that the rent must be a peppercorn rent. Therefore, if our Bill had stopped at Clause 1, the owners would have had to transfer their schools for nothing to the local authority, or they would have been obliged to remain outside the scheme of national education altogether. What would have been said if this Bill had stopped at Clause 1? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin made a speech in the country in which he said that the thing he hated most was the incredible meanness of offering a pecuniary consideration in order to tempt, as he seemed to suppose, the owners of these schools to violate their trust and to part with their property. But we shall want to know during the course of these debates in Committee who is there competent to represent all these owners. There are no Members in this House who are able to represent or who say they are able to represent the Church of England; it is a pretty big thing to do. But here we have to deal with a large number of these owners, and we shall want to know their views upon this portion of the Bill, and whether they agree with the right hon. Gentleman whom I have quoted, in thinking that the extraordinarily full and ample provisions which were explained by my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer deserve to be described as incredibly mean. The National Society, which is a kind of trade union for these schools, and represents their interests very ably and astutely, I think, have been accustomed far too long to flourish in the face of the nation somewhat dangerous arguments. I think they have relied a little too long upon the supposed cash value of their bricks and mortar. They have said—"Here we are; no politician, no Chancellor of the Exchequer, no House of Commons will ever venture to interfere with us. You must not steal us, you cannot do without us, and you are too poor to replace us." I doubt the wisdom of employing arguments of that sort. The credit of this country is still sufficiently good to float a loan and to provide the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a Sinking Fund quite sufficient to enable the country, if it chooses, to acquire and to build buildings of the country's own, and to spend money on our own buildings, and not on other people's. Every parish would then be in possession of a building which would indeed be its own building, and could be put to every kind of important use and play a great part in our village life. I doubt the wisdom of heaping such scorn and ignominy upon Clauses 2 and 3. They were meant to mitigate a certain amount of harshness which I am afraid is inherent in Clause 1. But unless you are prepared to say that the bargain between the voluntary schools and the State made in 1870, upon terms which have been altogether departed from, was an eternal bargain and cannot be altered, that it rivets the existing system upon the State for ever whether it likes it or not—unless you say that, you will be, I am afraid, obliged to put up with that measure of harshness which usually accompanies the dissolution or abandonment of something which has been allowed to go on for a long time. These clauses, I repeat, were honestly intended to mitigate that harshness.

Now, we have not heard very much in the course of this debate about Clause 1. It seems to me that many of you have allowed it almost to go by default. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, I think, was quite willing to treat it as a necessary and perhaps, after all, no such very bad clause. All the fury of the destructive criticism that has been levelled against this Bill has been levelled against clauses which, as I have already said too often, were intended to do good and not harm. I am glad that we may now consider the so-called "new religion" argument, with all its vulgar jokes, to be at an end. It could not stand against the admirable and convincing language of the present Archbishop of Canterbury. Nobody could get up before a Protestant audience with these syllabuses in his hand—and I know scores of them every bit as good as the Hampshire syllabus—and ask people to believe that the teaching therein sanctioned could possibly be described as a "new religion." Those syllabuses are instinct with the Christian religion. They are also, I admit, instinct with the spirit of Protestantism. In the opinion of most of us it would be quite impossible to approach a settlement—even a partial or a temporary settlement—of this question unless we recognised the fact that this country of ours is a great Protestant community, bent upon retaining in the education of our children the Bible as the basis of faith and conduct. The right hon. Gentleman in his speech seemed to think there is nothing in this Bill except Clause 4. The general rule of this Bill, as the right hon. Gentleman will see when he comes to read it, proceeds upon quite different lines and does secure in a very real sense both popular control and the abolition of tests for teachers. We are always being told that there are other solutions of this question. For months past I have received twenty letters a day, all beginning by promising, if I will read to the end, I shall find a solution of this problem. Although I have been disappointed hundreds of times, so tempting are those opening words I honestly believe I have read every letter that began by holding out that alluring prospect. The right hon. Gentleman the

Member for West Birmingham intervened in this debate and held out the promise that he knew a method which was likely to produce peace. I listened with all my ears. He shadowed out two proposals. One he did not pursue. It was what is somewhat pedantically called, though not by him, the pan-denominational. There is a sort of notion that it is possible to provide denominational teaching out of the rates for all different sects, and it has been conveniently imagined that were some such proposal the law of the land a great number of sects would retain their total indifference to an atmosphere of a school of their own. I do not think that would be the case. I think that many dissenting bodies, if they thought there was a chance of having their children taught religion at the expense of the rates in buildings erected by the rates, and a teacher of their own paid for out of the rates, who would be a kind of church officer to them in the management of their denominational interest, I am afraid they would prick up their ears and think they were just as much entitled to an atmosphere and a teaching of their own as anybody else. If a Roman Catholic child is not to be offended by hearing an English Sovereign described by a somewhat coarse name, I do not know why a Puritan child should be exposed to the danger of hearing Charles I. referred to as the blessed martyr. Therefore I repeat the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman, and so powerfully reinforced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the pan-denominational system in this country is utterly impossible; the people do not really want it, they would not pay for it, and great evil would result from it if it were possible; therefore I am not surprised that the right hon. Gentleman did not press it upon the attention of the House. His other proposal was a tempting one; it was that the State should boldly say, "We will have no concern with religion;" that they should maintain a position of supreme impartiality, making no distinction between the Gospel of St. John and the gospel of Joe Smith, but that they should keep the pit for all comers. Is that not so? That the State should take a position of complete impartiality and have no concern with religion in any shape or form or way, confining itself to secular teaching, keeping open the school for school purposes, but allowing the creeds of all sects, all denominations, religious or irreligious, whether they commended themselves to the mind of hon. Gentlemen opposite or not, if parents wished for it, to be taught on the school premises out of school hours. ["No."] In school hours, if you like; but surely the right hon. Gentleman does not propose to compel a Baptist father to send his Baptist child to school not to receive secular instruction, but to be instructed in Baptist doctrine. Therefore it could not be described as compulsory in school hours.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot go at length into it, but what I said was that, in my opinion, religious instruction should be given in compulsory hours, but that it should be open to parents who did not desire that their children should have religious instruction to ask to have secular instruction given to their children during that time.

MR. BIRRELL: From a selfish point of view, as Minister of Education, I want to know how that would lighten my task. Would Roman Catholics be content to send their children to what would to all intents and purposes be a Protestant school with Protestant teachers to receive secular instruction from the beginning to the end of their school days, subject only to this, that a priest of their religion might come into that public building for half an hour or three-quarters of an hour—between nine o'clock and a quarter to ten—to impart to these children the Roman Catholic religion? They would have nothing to do with it. Their demand, right or wrong, is perfectly plain and intelligible. They require that they should be permitted to have their own Catholic schools for their children, with Catholic teachers, and they probably rely much on the general effect of being taught even secular subjects by a Catholic teacher and being associated with children brought up on the same lines, venerating and respecting the same things. Therefore, so far as they are concerned, they would not acquiesce in the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman.

I do not know what authority the right hon. Gentleman may now have in Church circles. I quite agree that Church-people have made great sacrifices for these voluntary schools, and

I am very sorry—it shows how second thoughts are sometimes the worst—I have laid myself open to the charge that I never recognised the great sacrifices they have made or what the country owes to the exertions of the clergy of the Church of England in this matter of education. I thought of doing so, and then I confess the idea occurred to me that I should be accused of using fine language when I was introducing a measure which Church-people would not receive with any very great favour. It was purely from a feeling of that kind that I abstained from paying that tribute. After all, there is something to my mind offensive in a Minister of the Crown paying a tribute to a great Church like the Church of England. I do not suppose any words of mine could by any possibility really affect the question. At the same time I can honestly say that I recognise to the full, knowing of my own knowledge how devoted many clergymen have been, the sacrifice they have made for the maintenance of their schools. I want to know, Would these clergymen, would the owners of these schools, be satisfied to allow a Unitarian to come to teach his particular doctrine in their schools; would they wish to see it done; would they like to see a Baptist come in and teach that infant baptism is almost idolatrous? What sort of reception should I have met with from them if I had put forward that proposal? Look at the proposal of this Bill compared with that. Look at Clauses 2 and 3. Apart from the question of the employment of the teacher, which I admit is a very serious matter, under Clause 3 a great many of these schools will go on just as they have gone on before. People talk as if the Church of England had no hold in this country, no power; as if it had not got great control, as if the teachers were not by a large majority members of the Church of England, and as if the local authorities were all bands of Nonconformists, and the county council thought of nothing but how to benefit Little Bethel and Ebenezer. That is not my experience of county councils at all. They are apt to be conservative bodies. They are, at all events, divided in political opinion. The county councils I know certainly are of a very conservative character. But, however that may be, I am perfectly satisfied of this, that there is no more peace in the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman than I was able to discover in the thousand and one suggestions made to me in this matter.

I have no desire to argue this question about the inalienable right of the parent. I was, I admit, covered with humiliation and shame when my right hon. friend the Member for Dover, whose acquaintance with the bypaths of literature even in its humblest manifestations is so extensive, read out to the House a note of mine, which I was foolish enough to inscribe on a page of Boswell. He read it out to the joy and triumph of my opponents and the mute confusion of my friends. But me it covered with shame, for that note was meant to be a piece of withering sarcasm, I fear at the expense of the prelates of the Church of Rome and the Church of England. I thought when I composed it that I had really done rather well, until it was my fate to hear it read out solemnly to the House of Commons with all the magnificent elocution of the right hon. Gentleman as being the sober, solemn expression of my own deliberate opinion. Henceforth I must leave irony to Dean Swift. From all the deputations and petitions I have received the conclusion was forced upon me that the Protestant parents of this country desire their children to receive a Protestant education based on the Bible, and that those Protestants—and there are countless thousands of them—who are deeply attached to the Church of England desire their children to be taught the Catechism and the Prayer-book, and the Roman Catholics and Jews desire their children to be taught, as far as possible, when circumstances allow, in their own schools by their own teachers. In this Bill we have done our best to meet the desires of all those classes; and I believe when the proposals of the Bill come to be considered it will be found that we have gone a long way towards doing it.

With regard to Clause 4, many remarks have been made upon the observations I addressed to a deputation from the Jews. I did not know reporters were present. Sometimes at these deputations they are present, sometimes not. I do not see them. They are concealed about the premises. Had I seen them very likely my language, although in substance and effect it would have been the same, might have been pared of some of the expressions used and which the hon. Member for Cork, who is a great judge of language, described as picturesque. However that may be, I said what I meant and I meant what I said to that deputation. The Government intended, when they caused that clause to be drafted, that it should be a real, and in no sense an illusory, clause. If the clause assumes the shape it does, it is because we believed that on the whole it was more likely to be effective in the form in which we drafted it than if we had, as has been suggested, made it mandatory. All I can say is that the intention was that in these four-fifths schools, after their character has been determined and ascertained in a public inquiry, which is compulsory, although the machinery may come out different from that which it now is—the result is intended to be the same with regard to the religious teaching which goes on and the teachers who give it. With regard to the figure of 5,000 there is no magic in figures, but there is a very great difference, as all Nonconformists know well, between the atmosphere of a town or a populous district and the atmosphere of a village. The clause is intended to be a charter of educational freedom to the villages. I entirely agree with what fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham when he said how idle it is for people who feel a grievance to try to explain it to a person who has never felt it; and perhaps there is not much use in doing so. It is idle to deny that in villages Nonconformists have for many a long year had a very hard struggle for their existence. The ivy-mantled tower of the church, the pleasant rectory, and the eaves and gables of the schoolhouse, instead of being to the Nonconformists symbols of a common Christianity, have been symbols of strife and contention. It may sometimes be that strife and contention is not a suitable atmosphere for the production of all the Christian virtues. I am not going to say that Nonconformists may not have erred at times and been bitter in spirit. Those who know the circumstances of their lives and the hard struggles they have had for the maintenance of their Nonconformity cannot wonder that they rejoice at the opportunity now being offered to them to acquire in their village life freedom in the educational system and at the joy and pride they feel in the sense that it may be their own.

Now, Sir, I have spoken longer than I had any right to, and I hope I may be permitted before I sit down to make one appeal to this House in my character as Minister for Education. The one great thing we have acquired during the last six-and-thirty years of our educational system—the asset of the greatest value of all is the undoubted fact that we have at last established within the minds of the children of the parents of this country the habit of school going. It is an awfully difficult thing to introduce a new habit into the lives of our stubborn race, and it has taken years and years to do it, but we have done it at last. The records of average attendance have steadily improved year by year. Even in London, where there are all sorts of temptations to keep children away from school and to employ them in profitable jobs, the average attendance is 88 per cent., and in some parts of the country it is over 90 per cent. I do think we are able to say that, at last, we have introduced into this country what will prove to be a great boon and an enormous benefit to future generations—the habit of school going. I do not believe it is compulsion, I do not believe it is compulsory hours, I believe it is because the children have grown to be fond of going to school, grown to be fond of their teachers, and they go willingly. ["Oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen are sceptical, they believe that these figures at which I rejoice are all the result of police, and that if the children were left alone, and the parents, none of them would go at all because they are indifferent to education. I repudiate it. It is entirely false. We heard from a Labour Member this afternoon, the Member for Blackburn, the statement that he rejoiced to notice that the working-classes of this country were more and more conscious of the enormous benefit of education, more and more determined that their children should have it. That is the cause of this enormous increase, this steady, constant increase in the average attendance in our State-aided schools. What I want to point out is that it would be a terrible disaster were there to be any gap in that system, even for the shortest time—were any alterations made in our system which made it difficult for any portion of the community, I care not who or what it is, to continue to send their children to school. As the Minister for Education, I cannot honestly or conscientiously make myself responsible for any such hideous gap, because I should feel that the habit once broken would probably be with great difficulty restored, and all the good we have been doing during the last thirty years might be hastily and unnecessarily undone. I therefore do hope that this Bill, when it comes to be discussed, will be discussed in a spirit of peace, and with the fixed and determined desire that so far as possible all the children in the country should still continue to enjoy the blessings of education. Knowledge and learning nobody need be afraid of. After all, all creeds, all Churches, all claims to authority which Churches possess, must ultimately be tried by the test of reason. A man does not submit to the Roman Catholic Church by the abrogation of his reason; he practices his reason on the question, and his reception into the Church and his acknowledgment of the authority of the Church flows from and is the natural consequence of an act of reason which he has asserted. Knowledge and learning nobody need be ashamed of. The wisest man that ever sat in this House, I think I am right in saying, certainly the wisest man who ever sat in this House as Member for Liverpool—I mean Francis Bacon—employed words with which I will conclude—

> "There is no power on earth that setteth up a throne in the spirits and souls of men, and in their cogitation, imagination, opinions, and beliefs, but knowledge and learning."

Let us then adhere to schools, and to our school system, and in all our legislation, in all our quarrels and wrangles, and all our disputes and differences, keep this point steadily in view of the children of this country, who still continue, as I believe the great majority do now, to go to school joyfully, eagerly, willingly, and profitably.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 410; Noes, 204. (Division List No. 71.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Hy.
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John Emmott (Somerst
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn, John Williams (Devonp't
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N. E.)
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, Sir John T. (Cheshire)
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. S. J.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Crossley, William J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David (Montgomery Co

Davies,M.Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar,Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson,W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dodd, W. H.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner, Col. Alan (Hereford,S.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis, J.
Grove, Archibald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir (MerthyrTydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth,Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth,R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davis, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur, A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M.(Aberdeen,W.
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Lief (Appleby)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G.(Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil(St.Pancras,E.
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon.David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lutterell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallett, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Moss, Samuel
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussel Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Pearson,W. H. M. (Suffolk,Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps,Col.Ivor (S'thampton)
Phillipps,J.Wynford(Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C.E.(Edinb'gh, Central)
Price,Robert John (Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley,W.E.B. (Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards,Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richards,T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E.(Dundee)
Robertson,Sir G.Scott (Bradf'd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Chas.E. (Manchester)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton under Lyne

Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southamp'n
Wardle, George J.
Thomas Warner, Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson, A. (Elgin and Nairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woohouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ambrose, Robert
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (City Lond.
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marlyebone, E.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Clancy, John Joseph
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craik, Sir Henry
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Dalrymple, Viscount
Delany, William
Devlin Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dillon, John
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Faber, George Denison (York
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.
Fardell, Sir T. George
Farrell, James Patrick
Fell, Arthur
Field, William
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fletcher, J. S.
Flynn, James Christopher
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gilhooly, James
Ginnell, L.
Glover, Thomas
Haddock, George R.
Halpin, J.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hammond, John
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harrington, Timothy
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.
Hills, J. W.
Hogan, Michael
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col.
Keswick, William
Kilbride, Denis
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift

Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mooney, J. J.
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seddon, J.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormsk'rk
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Young, Samuel
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

EDUCATION OF DEFECTIVE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read a third time upon Monday next.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow.

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the clock on Thursday evening, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX 1

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CLVI.

Those marked thus* are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the House of Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Aliens	*Lord Weardale*	Read 1ª 10th May (1422)
*Notice of Accidents	*Earl Beauchamp*	Read 1ª 30th April (205)
*Police Superannuation	*Earl Beauchamp*	Read 1ª 30th April (205) Read 2ª 10th May (1418)
*Post Office (Money Orders)	*Earl of Granard*	Read 1ª 30th April (205) Read 2ª 4th May (837) Committee, Report } 7th May (917)
Public Health Acts (Building Bye-Laws) [H.L.]	*Lord Hylton*	Report 3rd May (672) Read 3ª and passed 10th May (1419)
*Public Trustee [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Committee 7th May (920) Report 10th May (1429)
*Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland)	*Lord Denman*	Read 1ª 30th April (205) Read 2ª 1st May (373) Committee 3rd May (672) Report 4th May (837) Read 3ª and passed 7th May (917)
Solicitors Bill [H.L.]	*Lord Alverstone*	Read 2ª 4th May (836) Committee, Report } 8th May (1104) Read 3ª and passed 10th May (1422)
Street Betting [H.L.]	*Lord Davey*	Read 1ª 10th May (1418)

(B.) House of Commons.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Aliens	*Mr. O'Grady*	Committee Report 2nd May (668) Read 3° and passed 8th May (1288)
Allotments (London)	*Mr. J. W. Benn*	Second Reading adjourned 30th April (367)
Drunkenness (Ireland)	*Mr. T. W. Russell*	Bill Withdrawn 1st May (532)
*Education (England and Wales)	*Mr. Birrell*	Second Reading 7th May (1010) (1065) Second Reading 8th May (1174) (1241) Second Reading 9th May (1317) „ „ 10th May (1504) (1564)
Education of Defective Children (Scotland)	*Mr. Gulland*	Read 2° 3rd May (824) Committee Report 10th May (1621)
Education of the Blind	*Mr. Steadman*	Read 1° 7th May (1002)
Engines and Boilers (Persons in charge) (No. 2)	*Mr. Steadman*	Read 1° 30th May (271)
*Fatal Accidents and Sudden Deaths (Scotland)	*Mr. Thomas Shaw*	Read 1° 8th May (1174)
Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities (No. 2)	*Sir Chas. Dilke*	Read 1° 26th April (38)
Grocers' Licenses (Scotland)	*Mr. Rainey*	Read 1° 7th May (1002)
Ground Game	*Mr. Beale*	Read 1° 27th April (192)
Housing of the Working Classes Acts (Amendment)	*Mr. Mackarness*	Read 2° 27th April (131)
*Indian Railways' Act Amendment	*Mr. Ellis*	Read 1° 2nd May (580)
*Justices of the Peace (No. 2)	*Sir W. Robson*	Committee 1st May (476) (498) „ 2nd May (592)
Light Dues Abolition	*Sir R. Ropner*	Second Reading defeated 4th May (851).
*Light Railways	*Mr. Lloyd-George*	Read 1° 1st May (423)
London Traffic Board	*Mr. Dickson-Poynder*	Read 1° 3rd May (744)
Market Gardeners' Compensation	*Col. Long*	Bill Withdrawn 9th May (1416)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Marriage with Foreigners	*Mr. Herbert Samuel*	Read 1° 10th May (1503)
Merchant Shipping Act Amendment	*Mr. Jackson*	Second Reading (adjourned) 27th April (186)
Municipal Corporations	*Mr. Vivian*	Read 2° 9th May (1416) Committee Report 10th May (1622)
*Plural Voting	*Mr. Harcourt*	Read 1° 2nd May (580)
Rating of Machinery	*Mr. Bright*	Second Reading adjourned 4th May (893)
*Reserve Forces	*Mr. Haldane*	Committee Report 2nd May (633)
Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) (No. 2)	*Mr. Joyce*	Read 2° 9th May (1416)
*Seamen and Soldiers False Characters	*Mr. Haldane*	Committee 2nd May (635)
Street Betting	*Mr. Yoxall*	Read 1° 10 May (1502)
Street Traffic Regulation	*Mr. Shackleton*	Read 1° 10th May (1503)
*Telegraph Construction	*Mr. Sydney Buxton*	Read 1° 10th May (1503)
Vaccination Prosecutions	*Mr. Pickersgill*	Read 1° 4th May (911)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1906.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

In Continuation of List given in previous Volume.

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford),—Copy of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Merton College, Oxford, on 9th December 1905, altering and amending Statutes III., V., and VIII. of the College Statutes [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 49]	30 April	12 weeks
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford),—Copy of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, on 23rd April 1904, amending Statute XXIV. (b), and on 2nd December 1905 amending Statutes XXIV. (b) and XXXII. (a) of the College Statutes [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 49]	30 April	12 weeks
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Cambridge),—Copy of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, on 29th December 1905, amending certain of the Statutes of the College [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 49]	30 April	12 weeks
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Bolton, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Hairdressers' and Barbers' Shops within the Borough [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	30 April	40 days
Intermediate Education (Ireland),—Copy of Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1907 [41 and 42 Vic., c. 66, s. 6]	2 May	40 days
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Urban District Council of Rhondda, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Barbers' Shops within the District [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	4 May	40 days
Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889 (Ordinance),—Copy of University Court Ordinance No. XIV. (Edinburgh, No. 4) (Institution of Degrees in Veterinary Medicine and Surgery and relative Regulations) [52 and 53 Vic., c. 55, s. 20]	7 May	12 weeks
Intermediate Education (Ireland),—Copy of Rule amending Time Table of Examinations for 1906 [41 and 42 Vic., c. 66, s. 6]	10 May	40 days

INDEX

TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1906.

APRIL 26—*MAY* 10.

EXPLANATION OF ARRANGEMENT AND ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills: Read First, Second, or Third Time = 1R., 2R., 3R. [*c.*] = Commons. [*l.*] = Lords. *Amendt.* = Amendment. *Os.* = Observations. *Qs.* = Questions. *As.* = Answers. *Com.* = Committee. *Con.* = Consideration. *Rep.* = Report.

Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that Stage of the Bill, or on that Vote.

Subjects discussed in Committee of Supply are entered under their headings, and also under Members' Names, without reference to the actual Vote before the Committee.

Abbeyleix
- Police Force, Religious Denomination of Case of Head Constable Spence, etc.
  - *Q.* Mr. Meehan; *A.* Mr. Bryce, *May 3,* 735.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Meehan, Mr. J. Redmond; *As.* Mr. Bryce, *May 3,* 738, 739.

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Solicitor-General—Mr. R. Barry.

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Qs. Mr. Seaverns, Mr. Wardle ; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *May 2*, 563, 564.

Additional Land, Conditions of Leasing.
Qs. Mr. Seaverns ; *As.* Mr. Harcourt, *Apr. 30*, 247.

Control of Pathways, Refreshment Tariff etc.
Qs. Mr. Myer, Mr. J. Ward ; *As.* Mr. Speaker, Mr. Harcourt, *Apr. 30*, 248.

Subway, additional, proposed.
Q. Mr. Myer ; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *May 7*, 987.

Zouche of Haryngworth, Lord

Local Taxation System—Abuse of Compounding system, etc., *May 8*, 1124–1126.